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THE LONDON QUARTERLY & HOLBORN REVIEW

Edited by J. Alan Kay, M.A., Ph.D.

PRR

OCTOBER 1955

UNIVERSITY
OF MICHIGAN

OCT 31 1956

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THE EPWORTH PRESS

[FRANK H. CUMBERS]

25-35 CITY ROAD LONDON EC1

Four Shillings Net

THE LONDON QUARTERLY AND HOLBORN REVIEW
is published on 25th March, June, September and December. All contributions (typewritten, if possible) should be sent to the Editor, 25-35, City Road, London, E.C.1, with stamped addressed envelope.

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Editorial Comments

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

WHENEVER A MAN has written about religion in such a way as to produce a classic of devotion, then (with one kind of exception) it is found that he has also produced a classic of literature. Works like the Bible, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and *The Book of Common Prayer* are as great in the realm of literature as in the realm of religion. The one kind of devotional writing which is an exception is the hymn, and there are special reasons for that. In some respects, words written for singing must follow the laws of music rather than those of poetry, and they thus have to conform to a discipline that is to some extent unnatural to them; in hymns especially, where every verse is sung to exactly the same tune, they have to wear a strait-jacket, both in rhythm and feeling, which often prevents them from moving with proper freedom and grace. But more important still, hymns are not written to be complete in themselves; they are only half of a whole. It is not until they are combined with music that they are complete, and by being combined with it their rhythms are altered, their inflexions of pitch are changed, their emotional attitudes are transformed, and their mood becomes conformed to that of the musical setting. In both secular and religious realms, it frequently happens that a first-rate song has words which can hardly be dignified with the name of poetry, but fall merely into the category of verse—and sometimes rather poor verse. With the exception of hymns, however, it is true that devotional masterpieces are also literary masterpieces.

This suggests that there must be some close connexion between the realms of literature and devotion. They are obviously not identical (although there have been men like Matthew Arnold and others who have tried to make literature a substitute for religion), and no Christian man who acknowledged that great devotion was great literature would be so foolish as to add that great literature was necessarily great devotion; but that there is some important link between them is undeniable. The link would seem to be a threefold one.

The ultimate (as distinct from the immediate) subject-matter of both realms is the same. Devotion is concerned with God; great literature gives us what Bergson calls 'a more direct vision of reality', and what I. A. Richards more cautiously describes as a 'sense of immediate revelation'. Although the literary creator may be writing about King Lear or Thomas à Becket, a sofa or a celandine, a good wif of Bathe or a lock of Belinda's hair, he somehow sees them as within, and even penetrated by, a spirit which pervades all being, his feeling about them is proportioned to their significance as parts of a universal whole, his manner of writing about them is conditioned by his approach to the whole meaning of existence, his attitude to them is one aspect of the general attitude with which he faces ultimate and eternal truth. He writes not about them only, but about that in which we all live and move and have our being; and when he is at his greatest, he is conscious that this unbounded all-embracing and pervading Spirit is timeless, purposeful, good, and in control.

Both realms are concerned not merely with facts, but with the feelings and attitudes which those facts arouse. The scientist and the mathematician are

not, as such, concerned with whether the facts they observe and record move them to wonder, delight, nausea, or irritation, but for the writer of devotion and the man of letters such things are of fundamental importance. Devotion and literature do not consist in the record of mere cold facts; they express the author's attitude to the facts, and if his writing is to be good, that attitude must be fitting. Both kinds of writing recognize the same standards of fitness, and their virtues and vices are therefore in this respect the same. Both maintain that the right way of reacting to reality is with honesty, sensitiveness, interest (varying from liveliness to serious concern), and acceptance (ranging from resignation to love); and both abhor dishonesty, unreality, indifference, listlessness, obtuseness and self-indulgence. Both experience the fact that to react in the right way brings peace and joy, and that to react in the wrong way results in instability, a divided mind, and internal defeat.

Both realms are concerned, though in slightly different ways, with form. The man of letters knows that his work is not right unless it is a unity—that is, unless it is both whole and complete. To make it whole, he takes pains to avoid loose ends, irrelevancies, and parts which are unrelated (whether by likeness or contrast) to the rest. To make it complete, he gives it a definite beginning and end—not drifting into his story or argument haphazard, but fixing a point at which it makes a definite start; and not leaving before it has reached the end, nor allowing it merely to stop, but bringing it to a conclusion. The devotional writer seeks the same kinds of unity. He too avoids loose ends, because he knows they would distract his reader's attention; and he too starts with a real beginning and ends with a real conclusion, because he wants to arrest his reader's mind from the first moment and leave a clear impression upon it when he has done. Both writers are thus very much concerned with form, the one because, like every other sort of artist, he is setting out to make a design (that is, a pattern which feels purposeful), the other because he has a design (that is, a purpose) to fulfil.

The relative importance, however, of what we may broadly call form and content is not necessarily the same in the two kinds of writing. In literature, the pattern of the whole, the shapeliness of the parts, the sound of the words, and the picturesque quality of the similes and metaphors are often consciously enjoyed, and may form a very large part of the value of the whole; but in devotion, the less one is conscious of these things the better. There are, of course, moments in literature when the conscious appreciation of form would be an intrusion, and when the only kind of art that is bearable is that which conceals art; but for most of the time literature is not like that. In devotion, the situation is reversed: there are some moments when literary grace may be consciously appreciated, but there are many more when it is anathema. A brief consideration of sermons, devotional books, and prayers is instructive here.

Sermons aim at moving men's wills and causing them, either in mind or body or both, to act; they distract their hearers or readers if they leave them saying, 'How perfectly expressed!' and they entirely defeat their own ends if they give the impression that they exist merely to be enjoyed. This does not mean, of course, that they must avoid all literary artistry. To write in a way contrary to the methods of art is to invite failure, for ugliness is at least as distracting as conscious grace; and even to leave the methods of art unused

is to suffer a grave loss in effectiveness, for it is to relinquish an irreplaceable tool. The sermons of Gossip, Whyte, Maltby, Wesley, Latimer, to say nothing of those of Jesus, are works of literature as well as works of devotion, and they owe a large part of their effectiveness in the second realm to their mastery of the first. Gossip himself very rightly says: 'Beautiful words and finished English win the heart. Style is not idle. It is power. Time spent on it is not wasted; the mere suggestion is a crime. For a phrase, an image, an apt adjective may bring home to some needy soul a whole new side of truth, may make it feel God is very near, may win it for the Master. It is often through such things that these great matters happen. It is the added master touch that makes it vivid, runs it into the mind, the heart, the conscience. It is, of course, largely the beauty of our Saviour's way of putting things that moves us. . . . And not a little of the pulpit's ineffectiveness is due to nothing more or less than the stodginess of its English' (*In Christ's Stead*, pp. 190-2). The point is, therefore, not that sermons must avoid literary methods, but that those methods must not draw attention to themselves. Hearers and readers must be prevented from thinking about form, not by giving them something that is formless, but by fixing their attention firmly on the content.

The same thing is true of devotional books, and is easily seen in the Bible. E. V. Rieu, in the Preface to his translation of the Gospels, says: 'The Four Gospels are spiritually supreme largely *because* they are great literature.' He is speaking about the Greek text, but the same thing is true of the authoritative English Versions. There is a loss in spiritual as well as in literary power if in place of 'But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him' we substitute the Basic English of: 'But while he was still far away, his father saw him and was moved with pity for him and went quickly and took him in his arms and gave him a kiss.' In his book, *God's Psychiatry*, Charles L. Allen, telling how he once went to see the play, *South Pacific*, says: 'Mary Martin sang a song that I think is wonderful. In that song she sang: "I'm stuck like a dope, with a thing called hope, I can't get it out of my heart."' He then continues: 'David says the same thing in different words: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."' It is, surprisingly enough, the same thing as far as the idea is concerned; but it is anything but the same in spiritual value, and the difference is due to literary form, to the use of 'different words'. Yet the Bible does not draw attention to its literary qualities. When we read Luke 15 and Psalm 23 we do not (unless we have in mind the comments of literary men who have deliberately turned our attention to the style) think of the form in which the thoughts are expressed, but of the thoughts themselves.

A similar thing is true of prayers. A poet may add very considerably to the effectiveness of his work by making his readers consciously enjoy the form and mode of expression, but the writer of a prayer must do his best to ensure that such things are ignored. They will be present and will have their effect, but they must pass unnoticed. The poet may, for example, use alliteration, and make his readers delight in 'the murmur of innumerable bees' and 'Of a fresh and following folded rank'; but the writer of a prayer who uses alliteration must make it sound so natural that it does not occur to his readers to make any mental comment upon it. He may say, 'O God make speed to save us; O Lord

make haste to help us', or he may speak of 'the changes and chances of this mortal life', but he is hindering his readers' devotions if he indulges in 'the puddle of pleasures and swill of the swine' (*Liturgical Services of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 564).

Prayers are more exacting in this matter than either of the other kinds of religious writing of which we have been thinking. It is permissible to allow the reader *some* degree of consciousness of literary form in *some* parts of a sermon or book of devotion; he is not required to be making an act of will all the time, and therefore, so long as it is not overdone, there are places where he can be allowed an extraneous interest of this kind. But a conscious interest in literary qualities is never in any degree permissible in prayers; for the worshipper is addressing God during the whole of the prayer, and he must not be distracted at any point—least of all by the thought of what fine words he is uttering. The phrases of sermons and prayers are thus not interchangeable. Newman ends his sermon on *Wisdom and Innocence* with the words: 'May he support us all the day long, till the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done! Then in his mercy may he give us safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last!' No doubt there are things about this passage which can be criticized even when it is considered as the peroration of a sermon, but it has a certain appeal and cannot be held to be objectionable. It is, however, much too high-flown and self-conscious to be bearable as a prayer, and it is not surprising that when it was adapted as a collect and inserted into the 1927 prayer book, it made Dr Brightman 'shudder'.

But when all has been said about the difference between religious judgements and purely literary ones, it is clear that there are large areas in which they coincide. Although great literature is not necessarily great religion, it expresses those attitudes of heart and mind which are produced by great religion; although it is not necessarily concerned with the specific truths of religion, it is concerned ultimately with that Reality which is the ground of religion; although it does not necessarily think of that Reality in Christian or even Theistic terms, it does embody an experience of what we may call the impersonal attributes of God; and although it may sometimes place greater stress on form and expression than is suitable in religious devotion, it can easily avoid doing so, and when it does not avoid it, the fault does not lie in using literary resources but in making the reader conscious of them. Religion, on the other hand, when it expresses itself in writing, finds in literary technique an ally which helps it to be fully effective and which it cannot contradict or neglect without loss of power; it finds in the qualities which constitute the highest kind of literary virtue those very attitudes to life which it desires to express; and it finds in the ultimate subject matter of great literature the rudiments of an experience of God which it can enrich and enlarge and fill with the fulness of the revelation of Christ. That the classics of devotion should turn out to be also classics of literature is only what we ought to expect.

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

'THE BIBLE is its own interpreter . . . we are all agreed to speak of it as 'supremely great literature.' So wrote James Moulton in his Preface to *The Modern Reader's Bible* in 1907. Even those today who make critical if not sneering remarks about the views held by many in the early years of this century must agree with some of Moulton's claims, and acknowledge many debts to men like him. Some of those debts are very practical.

The older and cheaper Bibles were appalling in appearance and horrible in their print. One has only to remember the repulsive black school Bibles and the numerous ugly cheap editions which were prominent and unread in most homes. A glance inside revealed two columns of tiny print on each page, which was also littered with italics, numbers, divisions and marginal notes, and was chopped up into strange chapters. The work of such editors as Moulton, Courteney, and Lawrence Binyon has produced attractive books with clear print and sensible arrangements of poetry and prose. School editions have copied them, so that today no child should be put off the Bible by its grim appearance. (Such attractive editions, however, have two failings: they are difficult to use if intensive study is intended, and they are generally too large to hold easily.)

Those who feel that the phrase 'The Bible as Literature' implies the word 'only'—a suggestion many of us would hotly deny—might nevertheless grant that it represents an approach which has resulted in many people reading the Bible more intelligently. It is surely difficult to read it as literature if one is grabbing proof texts out of their context, or interpreting individual sentences as direct prophecy or guidance for today. It is surely a gain to read a complete story, a complete poem, a complete gospel sometimes, instead of separate chapters as if such divisions were directly inspired.

In a short article it is impossible to discuss many aspects of this subject. Of course the sources of the various books ought to be described and the strata of older material discovered. Of course space ought to be found for questions of authorship and dates. Of course there should be comparisons between the interesting translations into English from the time of King Alfred to Dr Rieu. With regret I abandon these matters, and a little unfairly treat the writings of a few dozen authors over possibly 1,000 years as one book. What makes this Bible great English literature?

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch called the Authorized Version a miracle because it was produced by a committee of forty-seven men, and added—

That a large committee should have gone steadily through the great mass of holy writ, seldom interfering with genius, yet when interfering, seldom missing to improve: that a committee of forty-seven should have captured a rhythm so personal, so constant, that our Bible has the voice of one author speaking through its many mouths: that, gentlemen, is a wonder before which I can only stand humble and aghast.

He does rightly admit that their version was largely based on the genius of William Tyndale.

It is true to say that the Bible I hold in my hand is a book treating of three

main themes: God, Man, and the Universe. These are variously described and their relationships examined by means of prose and poetry, legend, history, songs, sermons, biography, and prophesy. Finally, the astounding claim is made that God and Man are reconciled by God becoming man in Jesus Christ. It is practically true to say that all the writers also accept certain assumptions: there is one God only, He cares for Israel especially and so particularly protects and punishes her, finally He will deliver Israel from dangers and enable her to fulfil a special mission on earth. All the writers start from there, but develop their themes in various ways and according to their own temperaments and moods. Another fact must be remembered by an intelligent reader, and that is that the writers live in a world of crises and peril. Their tiny kingdom is a mere passage way between two centres of world power. Israel, in fact, can never be secure or safe.

Turning directly now to the qualities of great literature which the Bible seems to possess, I take the list suggested by Mr A. S. Cook and propose to elaborate it from my personal preferences.

Firstly, the Bible has a unity of theme that gives coherence to the whole; this is, as has been already stated, the relationship of God, Man, and the Universe. The opening words set the keynote: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' Then the writer tells how God created the various creatures 'after their kind'. Ten times does he repeat this phrase in the first chapter—a fish is made like a fish, a creeping thing like a creeping thing. Then the writer produces his climax and complete shock: God makes man in His own image, 'in the image of God created He him'. The problem is set: how does a creature made in the image of God live in a world of creatures made after their kind? And how can man live when there appears a flaw in his developing nature? This great problem has finally to be resolved in a vision of a new heaven and a new earth, with a holy city (not a new Garden of Eden) coming down out of heaven from God, and God becoming man that man may again be like Himself. That is the unity of theme which holds all the books together.

Secondly, great literature has dignity and earnestness in treatment. The Bible never fails here, for its subjects are never trivial and none of its writers is insincere. This earnest dignity is helped by the sense of danger, of imminent disaster: all the world may be drowned; Isaac may be slaughtered and the race perish; the Egyptians may keep the Hebrews as slaves for ever; the powers of Egypt and Assyria may swallow up the wretched little Hebrew states as they do the other kingdoms; the gospel depends on twelve men, all of whom run away. It is also helped by a certain stress on size and age and space. The sweep of the creation story is breath-taking, and the only creatures directly named are 'great whales'. Many of the early men are giants and some live 1,000 years. Later in the Psalms we have always a feeling of the vast context of Nature, with the heavens above, mountains and wilderness around, and mysterious and frightening sea beyond. Dr Watts best stresses this aspect in hymns which cover not particular scenes but the whole creation, and Charles Wesley achieves something of the same feeling by the reiteration of such words as length, breadth, depth, height, wide, illimitable, infinite. The Bible world is never petty, and its characters, though often wicked, are never trivial.

Thirdly, great literature has breadth, dwelling on essential matters and avoiding befogging detail. Here again the Bible is a supreme example. Creation is described in a chapter and the whole entry of sin into the world in twenty verses. At times the brevity and statement of essentials are almost humorous—if they were not also suggestions of grim reflection on human life.

And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred, sixty and nine years: and he died.

The kings of Judah are simply and finally assessed: 'he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord', he 'slept with his fathers, and was buried, and his son reigned in his stead'. No Icelandic saga is more restrained or quieter in intensity than some of the stories in the Books of Kings. When the Bible poets turn to reflection, they see man in a vast universe and always in relation to God.

*When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained,
What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?*

Lastly, and closely allied to the qualities already mentioned, great literature has vigour. The Bible writers had no time for trifling or for the little curiosities of writing. A great story has to be told in little space, a profound idea must be expressed simply and directly.

So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto half the height thereof; for the people had a mind to work.

Emotion must be restrained, and though hearts may break, they are not worn on sleeves:

*And when he thought thereon, he wept.
And sitting down they watched him there.*

The quality of restraint is shown in many ways and may be illustrated even in the general omission of adjectives and adverbs. When these are used, they are not the easy jargon of everyday life, but have direct purpose. For example, in the story of the creation God examines His work at the end of each day—'and God saw that it was good'. But on the last day He examines all the week's labours and looks at the finished creation, 'and God saw everything which he had made, and behold, it was very good'. After such rapture as the little word 'very' now suggests, we are not surprised that the Creator took the next day off!

If we look at the best-known psalm, again it is partly the restraint which gives it power. 'The Lord is my shepherd.' The statement is simple and profound—in fact perfect, for nothing can be added or subtracted. How sentimental are many of the hymns whose writers cannot restrain their adjectives about shepherds and lambs! But the writer uses two adjectives—'green' and 'still'. The sheep find not the dry grass of the scorched wilderness, but green grass by still waters. We remember that still waters run deep. The whole psalm is coloured by that one word, and the quietness of 'still' lingers till we are at peace in the house of the Lord for ever.

Another quality, I feel, should be emphasized: it is the artistry of the writers. The story of Naaman perfectly illustrates it. Each character—Naaman, the little maid, the king of Israel, Elisha, the servants, Gehazi—is vividly before us in a few phrases. The conversation seems reported on the spot:

Am I God to kill and to make alive?

Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?

Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

And does any story in any literature have a more telling opening and ending? The description of Naaman as the perfect nobleman is built up by the long list of his great qualities: he was captain of the host of the king of Syria, a great man, honourable, victor in war, a mighty man of valour—but he was a leper. The story ends with the curse on Gehazi:

'The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went from his presence a leper as white as snow.

Artistry is shown, too, in the use of very homely similes and metaphors for serious statements. The contrast makes the shock:

I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.

Ephraim is a cake not turned (half-baked).

As a shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs or the piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be rescued that sit in Samaria on the corner of a couch, and on the silken cushions of a bed.

Much is achieved by the word 'corner'.

There is also an astringent flavour about some of the writing which gives 'bite' to our reading. Sometimes it is irony and savage irony at that, as in one of the oldest fragments, the song about Sisera. The early Hebrews are a savage people and the female of the species is more deadly than the male. The wretched Sisera escapes from battle and seeks hospitality in the tent of the good wife Jael:

*He asked water, and she gave him milk;
She brought him butter in a lordly dish.
She put her hand to the nail.*

*The mother of Sisera cried through the lattice
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?*

The old song-writer, as he gloats, leaves her looking and waiting.

At other times it is less obvious irony and less cruel. The usual method is to have sentences of a cheerful promise so that we expect a pleasant answer to our questions when we turn the corner. We turn and find the black precipice. Amos pictures the self-deluding educated nobles blithely chatting of the

coming Day of the Lord which will make a pleasant life even cosier. The day breaks: 'it is darkness and not light'.

You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities.

Jeremiah is fetched from his dungeon by the king who has doubted and ill-treated him:

The king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the Lord? And Jeremiah said, There is. He also said, Thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

We could continue to illustrate the abounding genius in the writing of the Bible by noting the lyrical qualities, the passion, the sympathy and kindliness so often shown not only in the matter but in the manner of expression. We can think for a moment of the great passionate cries ringing down the centuries: there is Esau's 'great and bitter cry, Bless me, even me also, O my father'; there is Job's 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; For the hand of God hath touched me'; and there is David's lament, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!'

There is no space to illustrate it, but no one can deny the truth of Quiller-Couch's claim that the Authorized Version has 'set a seal on our national style, thinking and speaking'.

It has cadences homely and sublime, yet so harmonizes them that the voice is always one. . . . The Bible controls its enemy Gibbon as surely as it haunts the curious music of a light sentence of Thackeray's. It is in everything we see, hear, feel, because it is in us, in our blood.

It is as we realize the greatness of its literature or rather as we forget everything and surrender ourselves to the delight and satisfaction of reading it, that we know we are in contact with inspiration which is divine. We can enter, in Binyon's words—

a world of mind and spirit and passionate drama, far transcending the horizons of the little private world we each of us inhabit . . . [To forgo that opportunity] is as if one should resolve of set choice to be poor in the midst of plenty and to dwell in a mean street.

T. B. SHEPHERD

THE SERMON AS LITERATURE

IN ANY consideration of the Sermon as literature, it is essential to recall at the outset that its prime task is the exhortation and instruction of the faithful and the conversion of unbelievers, if the latter be present, by means of the spoken word and the personality and emotional impact of the speaker. As the *ars predicandi* developed historically from simple informal apostolic beginnings into what the Middle Ages unblushingly termed an art, with prescribed rules of construction and stylistic embellishment, it was as a branch of rhetoric, not of prose-writing, designed, in the much-quoted Ciceronian phrase, to 'instruct, charm and move' audiences. The two chief agents that determined that course and gave to the sacred message a definite pattern and order which, in some parts of Europe, have lasted until modern times, were, first, certain of the early Fathers trained in the sophistic tradition of the old Graeco-Roman schools, and subsequently the medieval schoolmen teaching, preaching, and disputing in the universities. It is only at a much later stage in the history of the pulpit, after the long flowering of vernacular prose, that sermons could justly be described, for a season, as 'mere moral essays'. Consequently, if 'literature' here means 'fine literature', we have little or no right to expect it in this particular medium. As the great Augustine remarked of fine speech in the same context:

Let them seek it who glory in language, who display themselves in panegyrics and such exercises, in which the hearer is neither to be instructed nor to be moved to any action, but merely to be pleased.

Moreover, only the rare genius, on special occasions, can utter words that will retain their full persuasive force or their fire when committed to the page, and ministers of the gospel are certainly no exception. On the other hand, the vast collections of printed sermons and sermon tracts that, until recently, crowded the shelves of second-hand bookshops and are still to be seen in ancient collegiate libraries and the like, ranging mainly from the early seventeenth century onward, testify eloquently enough to a demand for a literature of edification that stretches back, indeed, beyond the era of printing and helped to fashion the ages of faith. Has this literature, or the instrument that created it, any claim to a place in our literary history?

A few years ago, the writer of this article was invited by one of the new editors to contribute a chapter on medieval sermons to a projected fresh edition of the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. The fact that there had been no such contribution in the original volumes and this apparent awakening to the need were significant. If we turn to France, for example, we find here, on the contrary, that from the early part of the eighteenth century, when the Benedictine scholars of St-Maur began publication of the monumental *Histoire littéraire de la France*, and in briefer surveys in the century following enriched by the labours of such learned archivists as Barthélemy Hauréau and Lecoy de la Marche, the medieval literature of the French pulpit and its authors had already secured such a place, albeit in most cases a small one. Thus, Louis Moland points out, in his study of origins, that preaching must have been

among the earliest uses of the vulgar tongue, and, therefore, an important influence in its development. Aubertin, who devotes ninety pages to the 'sacred eloquence' of the age, cites 'the most ancient record of the Romance language that history has preserved for us' in the shape of a sixth-century statement that St Mummolin was elected Bishop of Noyon, because he had equal mastery of the Romance and Teutonic dialects, and Bishop Maurice de Sully's twelfth-century Gospel homilies, discussed by well-nigh everyone and lately re-edited by Mr C. A. Robson of Oxford, are still recognized as the oldest surviving examples of original French prose.

Par lui s'ouvre la nombreuse série des illustres prédicateurs dont la science et l'éloquence, s'exprimant tour à tour dans la langue liturgique [i.e., Latin] et dans l'idiome populaire, ont donné à la parole évangélique, pendant tout le cours du siècle suivant, une autorité, une puissance d'action et d'expansion que les historiens littéraires ont trop longtemps méconnues.

For this succeeding century, the researches of Lecoy de la Marche established the identity of no fewer than 260 preachers, apart from anonymous discourses in approximately 200 manuscripts, in a notable work that was crowned in its day by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Unfortunately, however, until the era of Gerson and, indeed, all too frequently thereafter, it was the normal practice to record such sermons in Latin for the benefit of clerical readers only, even when originally delivered *in vulgari* (apart from sermons in verse, which we are assured were never recited from the pulpit). Nevertheless, although they provided no immediate reading-matter for the layman, their vivid detailed analysis of vices, saint and devil lore, dramatic treatment of biblical characters and events, elaborate allegories, lively dialogues, and biting satire of society in Church and State, together with a mass of anecdotes—ancient and contemporary, pagan as well as Christian, now droll, now terrifying—fables, natural marvels, and realistic sketches of the current scene, thus carefully garnered, show how much that was typical of the literature of the time was being passed on to him by word of mouth with the more serious instruction. In turn, no less obvious is the debt of subsequent generations of devotional authors and preachers to the written text, let us say, of St Bernard's noble homilies on the Canticle, or, on a less edifying plane, that of a Rabelais and his kind to popular Mendicant orators, such as Maillard and Menot.

For the period of the Reformation, the published sermons of Calvin, clear, vigorous, severely elegant, expository, are regarded as a further landmark in the development of French prose. Translated and circulating in Protestant countries far beyond the confines of Geneva, they illustrate, even more significantly, how the printing presses of the new era carried the pulpit message into the homes of an increasingly literate public and fostered a habit of domestic sermon-reading that was to last until the days of our grandparents. Advancing to the seventeenth century, we reach, as is well known, the *grand siècle* of pulpit oratory in France, giving it a notable and lasting share in the culminating glories of the French Classical School and producing another devout literature, very different from the former, but still read and appreciated, although more for its perfection of style and language than for its doctrinal content. Émile Faguet, for example, here speaks enthusiastically of a Christian *Pléiade* that

brought high honour to the Catholic Church—Du Perron, whose discourses, even before the turn of the century, 'were the literary events of his time', Père Joseph, the confidant of Richelieu, Bossuet, 'the greatest orator that France ever possessed', Bourdaloue, master of analysis and description, Fénelon, Fléchier, Massillon, masters of a tender grace. Whatever we may think now of its spirit or its morals, it was an age in which polished, fashionable society, including the sovereign himself, listened eagerly to the great court preachers, and men of letters, like Boileau, were not ashamed to acknowledge their debt to them ('In satire on women I am merely the ape of Bourdaloue'); an age well typified by its majestic *oraisons funèbres*. M. Faguet adds to his sketch a picturesque testimony from the aged Voltaire which might serve as its epitaph:

The sermons of Massillon are some of the most agreeable things that we have in the language. I like to have them read to me at meals. The ancients had this custom, and I am very old.

Returning to England, we shall find that, when the earlier gap has been filled, the story is much the same, in spite of the marked differences in temper and religious outlook between the two peoples. Owing to the comparative paucity of literature surviving from pre-Conquest times, our literary historians and philologists have naturally paid considerable attention to several series of Old English homilies of the tenth and eleventh centuries, valuable models of 'the fair Saxon tongue', of which the most notable are those of Aelfric, 'the great master of prose in all its forms', as Professor Ker ventured to call him. For the three succeeding centuries, as in France, the sermons that have come down to us from bishops, monks, and friars are set out in Latin, with rare exceptions, and, although equally rich in information on every aspect of the contemporary life, including abuses in church and state discussed with an arresting frankness, folk-lore and individual follies, comprise a literature that is only now being gradually brought to light, after centuries of neglect. Preaching in the vernacular to laity, however, continued throughout, and readers of the late Professor R. W. Chambers's masterly essay *On the Continuity of English Prose* will not need to be reminded that he hailed it as a leading influence in the preservation of our native language and its future blossoming into the splendour of Elizabethan and Jacobean prose. Actual examples begin to increase from the end of the fourteenth century, and some of the typical tracts in English on the Ten Commandments or other prescribed elements of the layman's faith, with their 'A, dere frendis!', 'The other day I tolde you . . .' and the like, were obviously constructed from such addresses, although whether they were intended for lay, conventual or sacerdotal reading it is often hard to decide. Certainly Lollard craftsmen and merchants owned and circulated *libellos* of that kind. In any case, from the latter part of the thirteenth century onward, the English pulpit, like its Continental equivalents, produced a considerable auxiliary literature for its own improvement in the shape of simple manuals of instruction for the parish priest, large and learned summaries of doctrine, frequently arranged alphabetically and equipped with elaborate index-tables, compilations of preaching matter sometimes explicitly—*ad instructionem juniorum*, formal treatises on the art and numerous collections of *exempla*. Although, unlike Eckhart or Tauler in Germany, our medieval English mystics

have left us no actual sermons, Richard Rolle, their presiding genius, will 'at least' write homely postils and tracts 'for you who have need to preach'. Naturally, therefore, apart from this more colloquial variety, we find specimens of the 'polite' discourse for educated ears, with its carefully-chosen ante-theme, its logical divisions and distinctions, its learned proofs and authorities, its balances and rhythms and its often extravagant imagery, a type denounced by Wyclif, mocked by Erasmus, but favoured for generations to come.

The rest of the story needs little re-telling. Wyclif's sermons and the return to a simple literal gospel have been discussed by the late Dr Workman. The *Cambridge History of English Literature* carries the survey forward from Fisher and Colet to Wesley and Whitefield in four scattered chapters, and Canon Smyth's more recent and comprehensive *Art of Preaching* serves admirably to complete it. Moreover, many of the leading figures continue to be re-appraised by men of letters, and such a handy little anthology of *Famous English Sermons* as that published by Mr Ashley Sampson in 1940 will enable the investigator to judge samples for himself, Catholic, Anglican, and Nonconformist. Among the English Reformers, racy 'medieval' Latimer still holds the field single-handed. Of the Elizabethans, the Rev. F. E. Hutchinson considered that probably Hooker and Henry Smith alone found readers at the beginning of the present century. But, with Andrewes, Donne, Hall, Jeremy Taylor and their contemporaries we reach the 'classic' golden age, an Anglican *Pléiade* still shining with a brilliance that only varies from critic to critic. Coleridge ranked Taylor with Shakespeare, Bacon, and Milton: to the hypercritical Saintsbury he remains, with all his faults, 'the ornament and glory of the English pulpit'. Southey proclaimed Thomas Adams 'the prose Shakespeare of Puritan theologians . . . scarcely inferior to Fuller in wit or to Taylor in fancy'. Sir Herbert Grierson dwells lovingly on 'the wonderful music' of Donne's style, as well as his figurative richness: Mr T. S. Eliot will have it that Andrewes reveals the greater spirituality, and so forth. In short, once again under royal patronage, few eminent divines of this period were not famous preachers, as W. H. Hutton observes, and many of them were also men of letters. Under the later Stuarts comes the inevitable reaction from the florid and 'metaphysical' to a plain direct manner of speech inaugurated by Bishop Wilkins and the Latitudinarians and well illustrated in Canon Smyth's chapter on the triumph of Tillotson, to whom Dryden paid grateful tribute. Hutton describing the change, in a world in which the sermon retained its popularity—'the sole class of literature with which everyone was, or might be brought into contact'—states that the preachers after Jeremy Taylor, rejecting a 'pulpit style' and adopting 'ordinary English', ceased to lead in the development of prose. But, with Arthur Tilley, a contributor on the Essay, he would at least agree that they had helped to prepare the way for the achievement of Addison and Steele. Of the contribution of Wesley and Whitefield in releasing the gospel message 'from the trammels of its literary convention' it would be impertinent to write in this journal. However, those pursuing their studies into the century following should not fail to note that the three main sources suggested by Canon Smyth for the unique power and posthumous influence of F. W. Robertson of Brighton, 'the one great preacher in the history of the English Church', apply with almost equal force to the Founder of Methodism.

Without reference to yet other countries concerned, enough has been said already to prove that, in spite of its primary task, the sermon has played no unimportant part as literature and as a means to the enrichment of it in the cultural life of Christendom. What, now, of the future? With the ages of oratory over in all vocations, plain speaking in general favour, and a sad decline noticeable not merely in sermon audiences, but also in the refined and leisured element formerly present in many of them, the finely-phrased discourse would seem to be out of place. Even in much modern literature, delicacy of feeling and expression today is as little in evidence as a sense of the beauty of holiness. Yet the preacher who cares for both, recalling the rich poetic narratives of the Old Testament and the delicate charm of the similes and parables of Jesus, may well refuse to capitulate. Here timely advice and encouragement are offered by one who writes on his calling in the opening years of the reign of Queen Anne, after a plain, unaffected mode of speech had lately replaced the verbal conceits and rhetorical niceties of the previous age. Dr John Edwards would tell him:

Now there is this heed to be given to the *Stile*, because first, it is *comely* and *decent*. Though an antick and fantastick attire be ridiculous, yet a graceful dress is commendable and adorns and beautifies the person that wears it. So is it in language, a gaudy bravery is justly derided, but a wise speaker will cloath his matter in a becoming garb: for he knows it is not fit it should appear in publick in tattered and ragged vestments. Even the discourse from the pulpit should have comeliness and beauty, but no paint; for the latter is needless where there is the former. The Royal Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, as he saith of himself, Eccl. 12.10. . . .

If a second opinion be needed, what is better than the old phrase that Professor Chambers delighted to borrow from Ascham—"a style "plain and open", but varied "as matters do rise and fall" "?

καὶ πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος, τοῖς ἐκπορευομένοις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ.

G. R. OWST

CHRISTIAN HYMNS AS LITERATURE

‘**T**HAT WHICH is of infinitely more moment than the Spirit of Poetry is the spirit of piety’, Wesley’s declaration in the Preface to the Collection of 1780, in as far as it relates to Christian hymns—the hymns, that is, which are commonly sung in the services of the Church—would command general assent. But we feel, as Wesley himself did, that poetry and piety must go hand in hand; that in a hymn there is no place for doggerel. It is nevertheless true that a great hymn need not be, and often indeed is not, a great or even passable poem; and conversely that a religious lyric, even if it is outwardly suitable in form and rhythm, by no means always satisfies the requirements of a hymn. The relationship, then, between hymn and poem is not easily definable—if, indeed, there is a relationship at all. A hymn is, in a very real sense, *sui generis*; the standards by which it is judged and the measure of its excellence are independent of, and to some extent different from, those we commonly apply to poetry.

For a hymn is not primarily a literary form. That is why it is usually given so insignificant a place in any criticism or history of English literature. Watts and Charles Wesley, our two greatest hymn-writers, are not represented in the *Golden Treasury*. In the *Oxford Book of English Verse* there are two poems of Watts, but none of his hymns, and Charles Wesley does not appear at all. One hymn of Watts (‘O God, our help’),¹ one of Charles (‘Hark how all the welkin rings’) and one of John Wesley (‘Commit thou all thy griefs’) is included in the Everyman anthology *English Religious Verse*. The *Oxford Book of Christian Verse* is a little more generous. There are four hymns of Charles Wesley, but only one of Watts (‘Our God, our help’); and among the few other recognized hymns included are Cowper’s ‘O for a closer walk with God’, Newton’s ‘How sweet the name of Jesus sounds’, Toplady’s ‘Rock of Ages’ and Ken’s ‘Awake, my soul’. Most anthologies contain a few of Cowper’s poems, but few any of the Olney hymns. Watts is given short shrift by Saintsbury in the *Cambridge History of Literature*, and Charles Wesley is almost ignored. It is significant, too, that the *Cambridge History* gives a patronizing sentence or two to Cowper’s contribution to the Olney hymns, but ignores Newton’s, though ‘How sweet the name of Jesus sounds’ and ‘Glorious things of thee are spoken’ are certainly not inferior, as hymns, to Cowper’s own. On the whole, it would seem that, to be recognized by the critics, a hymn-writer must, in the first place, be a poet or have excelled in some other type of literature, and that a hymn, as such, is rarely and, as it were, on sufferance classed as poetry. There are exceptions. Charles Wesley’s *Wrestling Jacob* (‘Come, O Thou Traveller unknown’) sometimes gets its meed of praise; and in an anthology of English Restoration verse published some twenty-odd years ago the Editor, Mr William Kerr, speaks highly of ‘While shepherds watched their flocks by night’ and ‘When I survey the wondrous Cross’ as poems in their own right. But on the whole, the hymn-writers and the hymns they write have a humble and lowly place in literature. They enjoy, or suffer from, a kind of critical patronage, as poor relations of another and greater art.

It is difficult to find, or at any rate to define, the reason for this. A writer

(Mr Ralph Lawrence) in the English Association's *Essays and Studies* (1954) suggests that it is partly because a hymn in order to be suitable for congregational singing to a repetitive tune, must be tied to a common, often four-line, metre. But this is certainly no more than a half-truth. Charles Wesley himself was the greatest metrical experimentalist in the eighteenth century; and at least one of his favourite metres (886.886) is that of two famous secular poems, Suckling's *Ballad upon a Wedding* and Gray's *Ode on a Favourite Cat Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes*. Still, this quality of 'singability' by an ordinary congregation of people in a religious service cannot be ignored, for it is intimately connected with the language of the hymn, not only in that it must fit a simple, or comparatively simple, tune, but also in that it must be understood, at least superficially, by the people who sing it. This means that its sense, vocabulary, and imagery must be attuned as it were to a common mind. There is a sense in which, as Canon Adam Fox suggests, the hymn has some association with folk-song. In the same book (*English Hymns and Hymn-writers*) he notes a development of this in the great age of hymn-writing, the eighteenth century. 'The best writers of the period', he says, 'tried very successfully to write as they spoke, and the hymn-writers did the same.' In a peculiar way the language of their hymns was not 'poetic' but, in a specialized sense, 'prosaic'. This does not mean that it was, in Wesley's phrase, 'creeping and low', for the very reason that the theme is sublime, and, moreover, in the great hymns there are always echoes of the language of the Authorized Version of the Bible. But the hymn-writer does not, like the poet, 'rise up with his singing robes about him', although paradoxically he fashions verses to be sung. He uses an individual and indefinable kind of colloquial language that goes to music, a language that rather avoids than seeks out poetry.

We may go further. Since hymns have to make an immediate appeal to the heart, rather than to the intellect, of simple people, there is often in them an element of sentiment, even of sentimentality. On the whole, the great hymn-writers—Watts, the Wesleys, Cowper—avoid this. But it is undeniable that in a great many famous and favourite hymns the sentimental element is strong: it is not for nothing that 'Abide with me' is sung regularly at the Cup Final. And this element is, of course, uppermost in what are commonly called chorus hymns. Their language would, no doubt, be condemned by John Wesley as doggerel; and in a sense it is doggerel. Yet such hymns only take to extremes what may be called the idiom of hymnody. They point the difference between poetry and the hymn. Demanding little of the mind, they are designed to go straight to the heart; and in as far as they do that, as hymns they are not to be despised. That they are not in any sense 'literature' is irrelevant.

We cannot forget, however, that Charles Wesley (in particular), besides drawing on the Bible for his allusions and imagery, has many echoes of the English poets. They were, no doubt, lost on most of the people who first sang his hymns, as, indeed, they are lost on most of us today. When we sing—

*With Thee conversing, I forget
All time, and toil, and care;
Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here,*

we are not usually conscious of Milton's lines in *Paradise Lost*:

*With Thee conversing I forget all time,
All seasons and their change; all please alike.*

Nor do we associate—

*Love, all loves Divine excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown*

with the song in one of Dryden's plays:

*Fairest Isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasures and of loves;
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian groves!¹*

But here, as less frequently in other writers, in outward expression poem and hymn draw together; there is a common ground. Indeed, to imply that a hymn never touches poetry is patently false. Some hymns, as we have already hinted, are poems in their own right; but they are poems with a difference.

That brings us to the point where we can look at the subject from the other side; for the relationship we are discussing is a two-way one. We have also to ask ourselves whether and how and when a poem can become a hymn. It is, at first sight, a somewhat odd question; but it arises out of the curious fact that very few of our recognized poets have written hymns as distinct from poems. Cowper is an exception, and so (in a somewhat different sense) is Robert Bridges, whom we shall consider later. But on the whole poets and hymn writers—and this supports our previous argument—are two separate races of men. As the eighteenth century is the great age of the hymn, so the seventeenth century is the great age of religious poetry. But though some poets of that period wrote poems which they called 'hymns'—the term 'hymn', like 'ode', being indefinite and flexible in meaning—these poems are not hymns in the sense that they were designed for congregational singing. Outstanding and familiar examples are Milton's *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* and Donne's *Hymne to God the Father* ('Wilt Thou forgive that sinne where I begunne'). The same is true—with the reservations set out later in this article—of most, if not all, of the religious lyrics of that century, even when they are of appropriate length and metrical form; true also of the religious lyrics of our own day, in which there is a new flowering of sacred poetry. Not that the reason for this is far to seek. The idiom of modern poetry and its metrical form, deriving in part from the 'sprung rhythm', with the stresses falling irregularly, of one of the greatest English religious poets, Gerard Manley Hopkins, does not lend itself to singing. The hymns must be cast in what is now called 'conventional' verse. G. K. Chesterton's 'O God of earth and altar', which did not find a place in the *Methodist Hymn-book*, is a notable

example. But even this somehow misses the true and peculiar quality of a hymn. The imagery and paradox of—

*Tie in a living tether
The prince and priest and thrall,
Bind all our lives together,
Smite us and save us all,*

fine as they are, lack something of the common touch.

But that statement requires some modification. After all, our hymn-books, especially those compiled during this century, do contain the work of poets and even writers in other realms of literature, who sometimes throw up as it were casually or by chance a hymn or more precisely a hymn-like poem. Herbert's *The Elixir* ('Teach me, my God and King'), Quarles's 'Thou art my life, if Thou but turn away', Tennyson's 'Sunset and evening star', and Christina Rossetti's 'None other Lamb' are examples in our present *Methodist Hymn Book*. And yet we have a feeling that these are poems first and hymns afterwards. True, sometimes the hymn element prevails. It does, for instance, in Whittier's 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind', which, somewhat surprisingly, occurs in a longish narrative poem called *The Brewing of Soma*, and in Newman's 'Praise to the Holiest in the height', from *The Dream of Gerontius*. But these are exceptions to the general rule.

On the whole, these by-products of the poets enrich our hymn-books. But it is another matter when poems, or parts of poems, that do not possess the underlying hymn-like quality are pressed into service as hymns. The opening stanzas of *In Memoriam* ('Strong Son of God, immortal Love'), the two songs from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 'Who would true valour see' and 'He that is down needs fear no fall', Blake's *Jerusalem*, and Vaughan's 'My soul, there is a country' are examples, though it must be admitted that as hymns they just about pass muster. It was the compilers of *Songs of Praise* who went to extremes in the adaptation of poem to hymn, and have, by their example, influenced other modern collections. A sonnet of Spenser and Shakespeare, one or two pieces from Herrick's *Noble Numbers*, part of Christopher Smart's *Song to David*, four stanzas of Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, the closing stanzas of *The Ancient Mariner*, Shelley's 'The world's great age begins anew', and a selection from Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra* (beginning, oddly, 'Then welcome each rebuff')—these and several other pieces, in part or whole, they plundered from the poets. And their practice was based upon an entirely fallacious theory, that the poem and the hymn could be equated, that a lyric, however faintly religious, could be set to a tune and clapped between the covers of a hymn-book. What they did in effect was to produce a collection which in itself illustrates and accentuates the difference between the true hymn and the religious poem.

The Preface to *Songs of Praise* pays tribute to 'the late Poet Laureate, Robert Bridges, whose genius as a poet and lover of good music began the present revival of hymnody', and declares that 'it was due to his initiative that hymnody first recovered from the contempt into which it had fallen'. There is, here, an obvious implication. Robert Bridges, a poet, thought that hymns

ought to be poetic, that they ought to be raised up into the realm of literature. So he set about making a collection of 100 hymns, nearly half of them his own, either original and translated, set to what he considered worthy tunes, none of which, by the way, was of later date than the early years of the eighteenth century. He called his book, which was published in 1899, the *Yattendon Hymnal*. This book has been usually commended by the critics as the work of a poet and a scholar; and Bridges's own hymns have been generously—too generously—praised. Of 'Rejoice, O land, in God thy might' (*M.H.B.*, 882) Canon Fox says, for example, that it is a 'model of what a hymn should be', and this in spite of the fact that it consists of no fewer than ten short, rather flat sentences, eight of which correspond to the metrical line. Yet both Canon Fox and Mr Ralph Lawrence in the article already mentioned have to confess that the *Yattendon Hymnal* was not a success. Mr Lawrence, indeed, speaks of its hymns as 'unexceptionable in taste, accomplishment, and literary distinction', but adds that if 'a magnificent phrase by Watts'—'meridian Light and Meridian Fervour'—denotes prerequisites for a hymn, then the hymns in the *Yattendon Hymnal* are unsatisfactory. He does not, it is true, draw from this the logical conclusion; but he puts his finger, a trifle falteringly, upon an important truth.

And that truth is implicit in the main argument of this article. Taste, literary distinction, even poetry, is not enough. The Christian hymn is not primarily 'literature' because its basic qualities—Watts's 'meridian Light and meridian Fervour', Wesley's 'piety'—are not literary. It is made of other stuff, with its own texture, and its own degrees of excellence. We come, full circle, to Wesley again. In a hymn 'Poetry . . . keeps its place, as the handmaid of Piety'. A hymn-book is not an anthology of religious lyrics; it is 'a little body of experimental and practical divinity'.

G. H. VALLINS

¹ The original text had 'Our God', as in the *Oxford Book* (below).

² These two examples are taken from Chapter VIII of Dr Henry Bett's *The Hymns of Methodism*, to which the interested reader is referred.

WORKS OF DEVOTION AS LITERATURE

IN A SINGLE article with a title such as this it is always necessary to limit the range of the subject. To some extent the other articles of this series do this for us, since the Bible, Christian hymns, and sermons are given separate treatment. Then, too, we are to consider devotional works as literature, and so we can exclude many books which, however influential and valuable, are translations and not an immediate part of our own literary heritage. We omit such classics as the *Confessions* of St Augustine, *The Imitation of Christ*, and *The Practice of the Presence of God* with regret, perhaps; but we should never come to an end if we attempted to range over the whole of Christian devotional literature.

Two things may strike us as we look at the field which remains to us. One is that the devotional inspiration in our literature is most fruitful during well-marked periods in certain centuries, leaving other periods comparatively barren. The other is that even during the barren times man's spiritual aspirations find literary expression, but in forms and under disguises which make them less acceptable for the conventional shelf of devotional works. Every age, of course, produces its own short-lived works of devotion, ephemeral because they deal with a local or temporary spiritual phase, or because the manner of their writing contains none of the preservative of greatness and universality. They are the little suède-covered books of our mothers' bedside tables, the dead lumber of booksellers' twopenny trays; the two forgotten books—*The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety* which John Bunyan's wife brought him as her sole portion when they married 'as poor as poor could be'; the curious death-contemplations of the early eighteenth century. God forbid that we should mock at them or deny that books like these have brought help to one generation, or even two, of simple souls. But they are not what we mean by literature—not because they are dated; all writing dates—but because they lack quality in style or in content. This study must be an attempt to select some of the great and lasting things in English devotional literature, to give ourselves what Matthew Arnold used to call the 'touchstone' by which to judge our modern reading.

The first short flowering of English works in this kind is found in the singularly unpromising period of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Of the handful of mystics who were then writing of their religious experiences—these include Walter Hilton, Rolle, and the author of the *Ancren Riwle*—the best-known and probably the best-loved is the Lady Julian of Norwich, whose *Revelations of Divine Love* describe the 'shewings' or visions granted to her in answer to her prayers for more love towards God. What strikes the modern reader about Julian is how much of her writing, in spite of the archaic English, in spite of her medieval dwelling on the physical Passion of Christ, is true and undating and deeply helpful still. It is her dwelling on the nature of God's love for us which makes her permanent appeal. 'Our God and Lord that is so reverend and dreadful, is so homely and courteous. . . . ' 'For our courteous Lord willeth that we should be as homely with Him as heart may think or soul may desire. But beware that we take not so recklessly this homeliness as to leave courtesy. . . . ' We remember, too, the famous passage in

which the mystical vision of a 'little thing, the quantity of an hazel-nut, in the palm of my hand', is granted to her, and she sees that this is 'all that is made', the whole of Creation, lasting and sustained in its littleness by the love of God only.

Much of the other religious writing of this period is so highly allegorical in character, or so devoted to the praise of a particular virtue—patience, purity, submission, and so on—that it has only a literary interest for us; perhaps the truest devotional poetry of the time is to be found in the older carols. The turmoil of the Wars of the Roses proved a barren period for most writing. And even in the sixteenth century, when Renaissance and Reformation together were rediscovering so many sources of spiritual strength, though poetry and drama came to a new flowering, devotional writing stood still. The greatest of all devotional books had suddenly become available to all men, and it takes a generation for such an impact as that of the English Bible to make itself fully felt in other literature. Perhaps, too, the poetic drama, which absorbed so much creative energy at this period, is itself a kind of spiritual experience, or at least supplies the raw material from which spiritual experience is derived; when one form is being explored to the full, a form dependent on the rediscovery of man in his human relations, other forms for the time being may be neglected.

At all events, the next great period—perhaps the greatest in our history—may be said to open with the publication of the Authorized Version in 1611 and to end, nearly a century and a half later, with the first hymns of the Methodist Revival. When we realize that this period includes Bunyan, Jeremy Taylor, Lancelot Andrewes, all the metaphysical poets, William Law, and a host of others, we can see that 'here, indeed, is God's plenty'. It was a time of exceptionally rich and fruitful tensions between spiritual opposites—sometimes within the same personality. And if the tensions led to conflict, there is no doubt that the depth and sincerity of conviction, combined with the influence of a language at last adult and enriched from the twin treasures of classical and Hebrew culture, produced lasting masterpieces, great both as literature and as Christian devotion.

For some writers, the love of God as a theme meant poetry; for others, prose. For John Donne, as he turned from his early love poems to the love of God, it was both; but his sermons, like those of Bishop Andrewes, belong to another part of this series; and here we have only time to touch on his devotional poetry, fruit of a hard-won faith. John Wesley quoted his 'I have a sin of fear', and modern readers can find in the difficult and labouring verse an echo of his difficult experience, which may often be ours too—

*On a huge hill
Cragged and steep, Truth stands; and he that would
Reach her, about must and about must go—*

In this realm George Herbert is a greater than he. Even leaving his hymns on one side, generations of readers have loved and learned from 'holy Mr Herbert' in the collection of verses which he called *The Temple*. Our own generation can appreciate the delicately poised wit which can make a pun out of a moment of high seriousness:

*Yet let them keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness—*

We are less jarred than our grandfathers by the twists of his metaphysical 'conceits', but not less able to be moved by the still beauty of—

*Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back
Guilty of dust and sin—*

the poem which in our own day brought a trembling realization of the love of God for her to the self-tormented soul of Simone Weil. We can add to our list of poets Traherne, Crashaw and Vaughan, whose inspiration (unequal but 'clinging heaven by the hems') is their experience of God's dealings with the soul.

Lancelot Andrewes contributes only a slender volume to our list, but it is a precious one. It has been said that 'he who prays with Bishop Andrewes for one week, will wish to pray with him to the end of his life', and indeed it is true that one comes back to the *Preces Privatae* again and again. Prayers for every day and for special occasions, they are liturgical in character, drawing freely upon ancient service books, the Fathers, and especially the Scriptures; but in their arrangement for praise, contrition, intercession, contemplation and thanksgiving, both more searching and more uplifting than any others known to the writer, with the possible exception of some of those by our own W. R. Maltby. So intimate, so truly devotional and closely knit are they that quotation is difficult; but fragments of the lively phrases echo in the mind, as when Andrewes gives thanks for what is written of the law—'oracles of prophets, melody of psalms, admonition of proverbs, experience of histories'—in which every phrase is a call to the user to stop, to add from his own recollection personal thanks for the written word of God.

We turn to the prose writers, and to the first chronologically, Jeremy Taylor, the author of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. If some of our authors keep a place on our shelves because they have given us living devotion rather than great literature, we have to confess that Taylor's place is more that of a great writer than of a spiritual guide for our day. Much of *Holy Living and Holy Dying* is didactic, and dated in feeling. Yet we can still read it, with more pleasure perhaps in its digressions than in its arguments, and carried along by the music of the incomparable prose. Taylor's mind is fertile with images drawn from nature and from classical story; he retells, for instance, the old story of the Ephesian widow (recently dramatized by Christopher Fry), and stretches it to two delightful pages, by the end of which the point illustrated is quite forgotten. Yet he has a unique combination of human charm and Christian faith; at his best he can lift the heart with a reminder of experiences common to Christians in every age:

And sometimes I have had some cheerful visitations of God's Spirit, and my cup hath been crowned with comfort, and the wine that made my heart glad danced in the chalice, and I was glad that God would have it so; and therefore I hope this cloud may pass. For that which was then a real cause of comfort is so still, if I could discern it, and I shall discern it when the veil is taken from mine eyes.

We might in passing mention Traherne's *Centuries of Meditation*, with its famous passage on the Kingdom of God 'about us in our infancy'—"The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown"; or, turning from the Anglicans to the Puritans, we might remind ourselves of Richard Baxter, whose *Saints' Everlasting Rest* was for years a classic of devotion. We might add, as of special interest to Methodists, an almost forgotten writer, Joseph Alleine, often confused with his kinsman, Richard. Joseph's *An Alarm to the Unconverted* was a best-seller of its day; but we prefer to remember him as the original author of *Directions for Believers Covenanting with God*, from which John Wesley, that inspired plagiarist, drew both the idea and much of the material for our Covenant Service.

But none of these, of course, compares either in literary stature or in permanent devotional importance with the greatest of all the Puritans, John Bunyan. There will always be those who will rank his *Grace Abounding*, with its moving frankness, its salt, drily humorous colloquialisms, its homely details of time and place—fireside, village green, puddles in the road—lit suddenly into eternal significance by the fact that *there* and *then* God spoke to John Bunyan, before *The Pilgrim's Progress*, allegory continually yielding to novel in its make-up, its lively dialogue, its picaresque adventure, its tender and witty character studies. It is a good thing we have not to choose between them; we could spare neither, nor even their less well-known companion, *The Holy War*. It does not really matter, we know now (though Bunyan's more strait-laced contemporaries had their doubts), whether we begin to read of Christian's journey just because it is a magnificent story; sooner or later we shall reach the places where we stop and say, 'Yes; I have been here too'. '“O Thou Loving One!” said Christian, “O Thou Blessed One! . . . Thou deservest to have me all; Thou hast paid for me ten thousand times more than I am worth!”' It is to *that* point which John Bunyan brings us—the central point of all devotion—and few of our guides are so strong, so sane, so wholesome and humorous, and good to be with. How daring, and how right it is that when Christian lost his burden at the Cross, he 'gave three leaps for joy and went on singing!'

Much of the devotional writing of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is of only historical interest now; Samuel Rutherford's *Letters*, emotional and repetitive; Fox's *Journal*, perennially important, of course, but difficult to read and psychologically remote from most of us; Penn's *No Cross, No Crown* and other works; the odd school of writing represented by Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs* (immortally summed up by the late James Bridie as 'a lot about blokes dying and skirts howling over them'); but with Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* we reach a book which had a lasting influence on the lives of men as great as Samuel Johnson and John Wesley, and which can still be read with profit and pleasure. What we remember in it now, however, is less the directions for the ordering of a devout life (how much all such directions date a book!) than the vivid character studies of typical men and women—Julius, who makes a fetish of church attendance; Calidus, who in religious matters 'contents himself with thinking that . . . he has always been civil to the minister of his parish'; Flavia, who 'will sometimes read a book of piety if it is a short one, and she can tell where to borrow

it'; her model sister Miranda; Caecus, 'who would have been very religious, but that he always thought he was so'; and Succus, who is 'an enemy to all party-matters, having made it an observation that there is as good eating among the Whigs as among the Tories'. Law's shrewd hits still have the power to strike home when he uses this weapon of quiet satire.

The best devotional work of the Evangelical Revival lies outside our scope. And it is curious that in all the enormous devotional output of the nineteenth century there is so little that we can regard as worthy to be named with these earlier works. We remember the Oxford Movement mainly for a few hymns and one autobiography, Newman's *Apologia*. What is interesting in this century is, once more, the use of other forms by religious writers; the religious poetry of Browning, Tennyson, Francis Thompson, and others; or the novel as an expression of spiritual experience; another illustration of our earlier point that a particular literary form tends to be the natural one for every purpose in certain periods. Shorthouse's *John Inglesant* and the works of 'Mark Rutherford' come to mind here; and recently C. S. Lewis has taught a larger circle to recognize the spiritual 'myth-making' power of George Macdonald, a writer whom some of us have loved since childhood.

What will prove to be lasting in the devotional literature of the twentieth century is (in today's vivid phrase) 'anybody's guess'. For one thing, the field is so wide that it is impossible for any reader to cover it until the natural processes of selection by time have taken place. If one may hazard a guess, Christians of later centuries may retain on their shelves very little of our directly devotional writing; but they will surely remember a few historical biographies, such as Glover's *Jesus of History*; letters such as those of Von Hügel and Evelyn Underhill; Lewis's *Screwtape Letters*, a satire which has stung more sleeping souls awake than is often realized; and—might it be?—one or two of the Christian plays of our time. Will other centuries find, like an Anglican friend of mine, that they can keep *The Man Born to be King* at their bedsides as a commentary on the Gospels? Or will they continue to read Eliot and Fry? Perhaps we are too close to these works to judge. What does seem certain (for can we not see the same thing even in the Bible?) is that directions for the ordering of Christian behaviour, even advice on the details of devotion, have only a limited and temporary value. Where a book is still a work of devotion for us, and not simply a literary classic, it is always the experience of a soul, the kindling of a spiritual imagination, the full man's response to the love of God in Christ, which makes him

*Unloose his stammering tongue to tell
The love immense, unsearchable.*

M. R. BIELBY

REVIVAL OF CHRISTIAN DRAMA

ANY INVESTIGATION of Christian influence in the drama and poetry of this century must begin with some consideration of the changing status of these arts. In the year 1900 the theatre was a flourishing department of an expanding industry of entertainment. The quality of plays, which had reached its nadir in the middle of the nineteenth century, had for some years been beginning to improve. This was both cause and consequence of a change in the quality of the audience, of a new seriousness in the circle and the stalls. In some Evangelical circles the theatre was still a vice on the same level as cards, drink, and romantic fiction. Roman Catholic priests were and still are forbidden to attend for fear of scandal. But in the 1890's many serious Christians regarded Ibsen and Bernard Shaw as improving writers on a level with George Eliot and H. G. Wells.

In the revival of serious drama naturalistic standards prevailed. The poetry in Ibsen's prose, and in his dramatic situations, evaporated in the first translations. The decisive influence was the serious novel, dealing with social and moral problems, transferred to the stage. *The Doll's House* was more important than *Peer Gynt*. Even Shakespeare was read and acted as if his plays were problem pieces about characters. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy*, first published in 1904, reveals a reading of Shakespeare completely dominated by the overmastering influence of George Eliot. The biographies of Shakespeare's characters are reconstructed, and their psychology explored, as if they were the complete and rounded persons found in serial stories. Plays, like novels, were believed to consist of characters assembled to act a plot.

If this is the business of the theatre, the cinema can do it very much better. It is early to judge after less than fifty years, but it is possible that the future of the cinema as an art, if it has a future, lies rather in the direction of Disney's *Fantasia* than in the naturalism imposed upon the film not only by photography, but by the dominant tendencies in the theatre, and in the world of fiction, science, and philosophy, when the cinema began to be an industry. No other art has developed so quickly into a business, requiring large capital for any experiment, but certain of repeating an assured success. The cinema soon succeeded in providing better dramatizations of naturalistic novels than the theatre could afford, and in so doing it came near to driving the commercial theatre out of business.

But the dramatic art has not been killed. On the contrary, the last twenty years have seen a remarkable resurrection of poetic drama. In the last century Coleridge, Keats, Tennyson, and Browning all wrote poetic plays, but none of them was a stage success. The present revival has come from an unexpected source, the surprising growth of amateur dramatic societies, not only among students at schools and colleges, but in adult groups in such places as London suburbs and Yorkshire and Lancashire towns. In perspective, the progress of amateur dramatics will probably appear as the most remarkable cultural movement of our age, and one of the most difficult to explain on a sociological or psychological basis. Why is it that in the age of the cinema, when so many millions of people are passively watching an entertainment made for them on

the other side of the world, so many hundreds and thousands are wanting to act? It is possible that the prestige of the star has something to do with it. If the young identify themselves with actors and actresses, they must find some way of beginning to act themselves. They find this round the corner in the local dramatic society, which will in the long run, if they persevere, draw them away from the cinema. But the true explanation probably lies deeper. The whole character of our civilization provides us with work and leisure laid on, and drains away significance from our individual destinies. This compels us to seek compensation in some sphere where life and action are real, if only in imagination. The same urge which drives so many to watch the action of a film drives others to seek participation in dramatic action.

Amateur dramatics have certainly been the springboard for the modern revival of poetic drama. I can think of no poet writing plays who did not begin there. T. S. Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* (1924-5) is an unfinished charade. His first play, *The Rock* (1934) was written to be performed by an immense cast, drawn from many London congregations, with one professional actor in the title part, for the 'Twenty-five Churches Fund'. Charles Williams began his work as a dramatist with two charades for private performance by the staff of the Oxford University Press, *The Masque of the Manuscript* in 1927, and *The Masque of Perusal* in 1929. *The Rite of the Passion*, which followed, was evidently intended to be performed by a congregation, and most probably in a church. W. H. Auden's *Paid on Both Sides* (1928) was called a charade. Christopher Fry's *The Boy with a Cart* was written as a *jeu d'esprit* for private performance. So was *Hosea*, by Sidney Keyes. It seems to me probable that the unexpected amount of support which such plays as *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Cocktail Party*, and *The Confidential Clerk*, and Christopher Fry's plays, received on the commercial stage has been largely derived from the practitioners and supporters of amateur theatricals.

Since 1945 some plays have been tried out on the professional stage with a view to amateur performance. Norman Nicholson's *The Old Man of the Mountains* is a case in point. It was not a London success, but thereafter has earned a fairly steady income from the royalties of amateurs. This is a new development, that poetic drama may be the one kind of poetry that pays its way. That the amateur dramatic movement derives some of its support from the Churches is a fact admitted by many who would much rather minimize than exaggerate the present vitality of Christian culture. R. H. Ward is an interesting instance of a dramatist whose theological outlook is far from orthodox, and who is certainly highly critical of the general cultural atmosphere in parish churches. Yet he continues to produce plays on Christian themes, to be performed by Christian dramatic groups. These plays, like most of the plays of Christopher Fry, seem to me to have more dramatic than literary merit. This itself points to a certain affinity of outlook between the dramatic attitude to life and some Christian attitudes, though not all.

The hostility of Puritanism to drama and to the actor was not simply a prejudice. It was, I believe, based on the intelligent perception of an essential antipathy between dramatic poetry and Calvinism, and a certain affinity between drama and liturgy, more especially the liturgy of the Church of England, where the people respond in chorus to the prayers of the priest, and

psalms and canticles are chanted or recited antiphonally from side to side of the church. Not only the Puritan but the conservative Papist was quick to apprehend a resemblance between the Book of Common Prayer and 'a Christmas game'. The Puritan regarded this kind of liturgy as a survival of pagan ritual in Christianity, and in this he was perfectly right. The question remains, and will remain a matter of theological debate, whether his pure Christianity is or is not an abstraction unknown to history.

It will be obvious that I am not a Puritan, but that I see nothing trivial or childish in Puritanism, nothing petty or pedantic in the objections of the Non-conformist conscience to the pleasures of stage. Any theology that emphasizes predestination at the expense of freedom must be hostile to drama. The dramatist and especially, for a reason that we shall consider presently, the dramatic poet will always be allergic to determinism, whether pagan or Christian, Calvinist, Marxist, or Freudian. He is not easily tempted to any kind of monism, or to a Unitarian interpretation of the mystery of the Trinity. He is more likely to be drawn to that kind of theology which those who do not like it suspect of Tritheism or pluralism, but he will reject the charge, for in his universe the unity of substance is as important as the trinity, or in other contexts the multiplicity, of persons. The dramatic poet in a Christian or a post-Christian civilization stands on the borderline between Christianity and the relics and remains of natural religion. This seems to me the best explanation of the religious attitude of Shakespeare. I do not know enough about Calderon to know if the same would be true of him, but Ibsen seems to me to be a Christian who had much more than a fanciful interest in northern mythology, and Yeats a passionate pagan in a Catholic country who could never come to terms with the local religion.

This kind of poet has a passionate antipathy to monolithic solutions of religious, philosophical, and political problems. In a Roman Catholic or Reformed Church he will probably be a rebel. But the contradictions in Anglicanism are as likely to attract him, as the complacency that is not uncommon in Anglican congregations repels him. The attraction of the Church of England to poets at the present day does not lie only, perhaps not even mainly, in the liturgy, but in tension and exchange between Catholic and Protestant elements, and between the two aspects of the Church of England, as a national Church and a local representation of the Church universal. This perhaps appears most clearly in the work of Charles Williams, especially in *Cranmer of Canterbury* and *Judgement at Chelmsford*, but also in *The House of the Octopus*, where the theme is not English history, but tension and strain in the mission field between pagan traditions and a new-found Christian faith. It is there in *The Rock*, and in another form in Norman Nicholson's *The Old Man of the Mountains*, where Elijah and Ahab represent the spirit of prophecy and natural, national religion.

Few will deny that the revival of poetic drama is broadly speaking a religious movement, with a strong ecclesiastical and a particularly strong Anglican element. But other explanations might be offered for the proportion of Christians among our poets, and Anglicans among our poetic dramatists. Something might be ascribed to the persistent labours of such people as Miss Phyllis Potter, Mr Martin Browne, and Miss Pamela Keily, and to the organization

of the Religious Drama Society. Cathedrals and parish churches have provided dramatic opportunities for such poets as Ronald Duncan, Laurie Lee, and James Kirkup, as well as for those whose theological interests had already developed in other fields.

This leads us on to the second part of our problem, where the facts are more difficult to ascertain. No one can reasonably doubt the existence of a modern poetic drama, which has succeeded on the professional stage as well as in the church and in the church hall, even if we differ about the poetic merits of certain dramatists. T. S. Eliot's abilities are now no longer in doubt, but Charles Williams, Christopher Fry, Anne Ridler, Norman Nicholson, Ronald Duncan, and James Kirkup raise more differences of opinion. Good poets are hard to identify with certainty. Professor C. S. Lewis and Canon Adam Fox have a completely different estimate of the significance of the modern movement in art from Dr Herbert Read, whose estimates would again be challenged by Dr F. R. Leavis.

We can, however, say for certain that no poet since Browning has commanded a large popular public for his non-dramatic verse. The modern reader no longer expects to find a good story in poetry. A very large part of the field that was occupied by poetry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been taken over by the novel, by history, and by prose works on social science. What is left for the poet to do? He can still comment on the dilemma of man in this world, on the past in relation to the present, and the present in relation to the past, with a concentration and complexity of allusion and cross-reference that do not lie within the compass of the historian or the sociologist, or even the novelist, while the novel remains within the limits of naturalism. Where the novel goes beyond these limits, as in Dostoevsky and Henry James, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and James Joyce, it approaches the borders of poetry itself, but then it is dubbed difficult, and loses its reading public.

Every poet desires to communicate, and therefore to be read, but the competition of fiction deprives him of much of his motive for shaping his poetry in the form of a narrative. The dramatic form is his best chance of being of use. It is also a form to which he is increasingly driven by the nature of his concern. The hundred *Cantos* of Ezra Pound are great conversation pieces in which the scene constantly changes from age to age and from civilization to civilization, compelling in us an awareness of unity in difference, of how many rivers from East and West have flown into the Potomac, and of how great is the problem of creating, sustaining, or discovering the unity of a world civilization. We may think the *Cantos* a splendid failure, but we cannot deny to their author the credit of tackling the same problem as Professor Toynbee in the *Study of History*, with less equipment in learning, but a sharper, more acid, and more original imagination.

Pound always stops short of theology, but he set the poetic problem which T. S. Eliot solved by moving in a theological direction. *The Waste Land* and the *Four Quartets* are both commentaries on the situation of our time illuminated by vistas into a remote past, pre-Christian and Christian. The Buddha as well as St Augustine is present in the former, and in the latter—

In that open field

*If you do not come too close, if you do not come too close,
 On a summer midnight, you can hear the music
 Of the weak pipe and the little drum
 And see them dancing round the bonfire
 The association of man and woman
 In daunsinge, signifying matrimonie—
 A dignified and commodious sacrament.
 Two and Two, necessarye coniunction,
 Holding eche other by the hand or the arm
 Whiche betokeneth concorde. Round and round the fire,
 Leaping through the flames, or joined in circles,
 Rustically solemn or in rustic laughter
 Lifting heavy feet in clumsy shoes,
 Earth feet, loam feet, lifted in country mirth
 Mirth of those long since under earth
 Nourishing the corn. Keeping time,
 Keeping the rhythm in their dancing
 As in their living in the living seasons
 The time of the seasons and the constellations.*

This is not and has never been the whole story, but it is part of the story that the poet wishes to tell. Another modern poet who has also become a Christian, Edwin Muir, writes of the sources of much of his imagery in a fabulous age—

populated by heraldic men and legendary beasts. We see a reflection of it in the Indian reliefs where saints and crowned emperors wander among tigers, elephants and monkeys, and in the winged bulls of the Assyrians with their human heads: angel, beast, and man in one. The age which felt that connection between men and animals was so much longer than the brief historical period known to us that we cannot conceive it; but our unconscious life goes back into it. In that age . . . the creatures went about like characters in a parable of beasts. . . . They were hunted, and the hunt, like the worship and the sacrifice, was a ritual act. . . . As their life had to be taken and the guilt for it accepted, the way of taking it was important, and the ritual arose, in which were united the ideas of necessity and guilt, turning the killing into a mystery.¹

This exploration of the remote reaches of the past, and the depths of the unconscious mind, in search of clues for our guidance in meeting the problems of conscious action in the present, seems to me the most distinctive characteristic of contemporary poetry and art. It leads inevitably to a preoccupation with the religious problem, but it is a mistake to suppose that the solution will always be Christian. Robert Graves, like D. H. Lawrence, believes that Hellenism and Christianity are twin sources of religious decay. In the last few years he has devoted much of his abundant poetic and extra-poetic energy to developing conditions for a revival of pre-Hellenic paganism.

Professor C. S. Lewis maintains in his recent inaugural lecture, that the culture of the modern world is further removed from that of Christendom than

Christian culture is from the pagan tradition. In so far as this is true, it is because modern science has made us all, and especially artists, more aware of the difference between nature and God. The problem for the modern Christian poet is to integrate the scientific attitude to nature and history with his Christian faith. This is most clearly illustrated in the difference between Wordsworth and Norman Nicholson. Both are Christians and Cumbrians, concerned with the same hills. The modern poet is aware of geology, of the record of the rocks, and of two religious attitudes, related but distinct, which in Wordsworth shade into one another in one natural piety. He is more distinctively Christian because he is more scientific. Science itself depends on an attitude to nature which is impossible if nature herself is the object of worship. The danger today, not only for the poet, is not scientific materialism, but a relapse into pagan naturalism, a deification of the natural order in one form or another. Not every revival of religion is necessarily Christian. We need poetry, as well as philosophy, to keep our awareness of distinctions sensitive and clean.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

¹ *An Autobiography* (1954), pp. 47-8; also in *The Story and the Fable* (1940).

A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE SACRAMENTS

METHODISM IS a highly rational religion. That is a statement which will be received cynically by some people, so I will try to give some indication of the sense in which I mean this statement to be taken. Methodism was spread through preaching and preaching is largely an appeal to reason, or at any rate John Wesley thought that it was. Methodism tries hard to express itself in a rational organization; it may not always succeed, but it consciously tries. Methodism is part of the great Protestant movement which has always relied a great deal on the proper exposition of the Word of God; the black gown with the white bands which my colleagues are affecting more and more is in direct lineal descent from the medieval professor's gown, and should betoken that its wearer can speak rationally and even with real scholarship about the Bible when this is needed. For the most part Methodist churches have plain glass windows which let in the clear light of heaven by which we can see things plainly, rather than stained glass ones which let in 'a dim religious light'. Moreover, Methodists, generally speaking, are a very sensible and moral people. I think, therefore, on the whole, although there are things that could properly be put on the other side, that I am justified in describing Methodism as being somewhere on the right of the Universal Church, if we take the right in the accepted Jungian symbolism as signifying the conscious element, and the left as signifying what is unconscious or appeals to the unconscious, or in some way expresses it.

If this is broadly true, then we should expect that Methodism would have more appreciation of what is clear and conscious rather than what is vague and unconscious, and this I believe in general to be the case, especially in the matter of the Sacraments. Methodism has never had any doubts about the value of preaching, although some of us may have wished at times that it had clearer ideas as to what kind of preaching is valuable; but it has been fairly plain since Methodism really took on the responsibilities of being a Church and began to set its doctrinal house in order that its notions of the Sacraments were much vaguer than its conceptions of preaching, and would require clarification.

Take the debates in the Synods and Conference during recent years on the sacrament of Baptism, for example. There were two schools of thought. To the first, the service of baptism was simply a dedicatory service and in reality aimed at the parents of the infant presented at it. It was held in order that they could make vital promises which would reveal that they had the right sense of responsibility towards their child, and be assured of the support of the Church in keeping them. The other school of thought was distressed at what was considered the inadequacy of this conception, and claimed that the baptismal rite had a value of its own even if the parents were not all that they should be; in some way or other something happened to the *child*. They were also distressed that Methodists should take an attitude in the matter that was purely sectarian, and not in line with the general practice of the Catholic Church. Their appeal was to tradition, although I did once hear a protagonist

of this school indulging in a little psychology. He said that psychologists declared that we forgot nothing, and that therefore what was done to the child was bound to have an effect upon it. The argument seemed to me to be particularly weak in the form in which he presented it, and I thought somewhat irreverently that if the baby were totally immersed instead of merely having water sprinkled upon it, the speaker's reasoning would be greatly strengthened, because the result would probably be a traumatic experience which would affect the whole course of the infant's life.

Generally speaking, the attitude of the two schools was one of complete rationalization; baptism was rationalized away, either into something that did the parents good, or into something that was in line with Church doctrine and tradition. The fact that symbols of baptism and rebirth are continually emerging from the unconscious, that there is something in man as man that continually calls for baptism, never came out in these discussions.

Yet in baptism we are dealing with something that is older and wider than Christianity; for man everywhere has symbols for the beginning of a new life that is different from the one into which he was born. In other words, we are dealing with something *archetypal* in baptism. To be baptized is a basic human need, and this really goes deeper than any rationalization about educating parents, or being in line with Church tradition. The Christian rite of baptism expresses and lays hold on something that is deep in the human soul, and through the use of a material medium—namely, water—it lifts that something into a significance that is beyond what is merely natural. Baptism is not simply a matter of tradition or of education; it is a matter of a basic need of the soul being met, and lifted into another realm.

Baptism is a symbol in the Jungian sense, not merely something *semiotic*; that is to say, it is not an *agreed* symbol like the Union Jack, but something that has grown out of the human soul itself, and has taken the form that expresses exactly the soul's need and condition. A great need or question of the human soul is answered by it. This is what is at the root of the obscure feeling that even careless parents have that the child ought to be baptized; it is not merely that they think it respectable.

The point about a symbol, as Jung uses that word, is that only part of its significance can be understood rationally. It arises from the unconscious, and therefore speaks to the whole man and not merely to his intellect or will. One of the shortcomings of Methodism is that we sometimes think we can quickly explain and rationalize what is basically deeper than reason, and do not see that man needs rites and ceremonies that have a reason beyond reason. The whole man is greater than either his reason or his will, and the Christian sacraments speak to the whole man, and therefore cannot be completely understood or rationalized, just because they speak to the whole man.

The sacramental element is present in preaching itself. The early Church did not think of preaching as exposition or reasoning, in the first instance. The *Kerygma* was simply the announcement of what God had done in Christ, it was the story of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, and as such the Word of God. The story contained the mercy and the claim of God. I do not mean that there was no argument or exposition, but that these things were simply carriers or means by which the word of God itself was conveyed. And this is

true of what we modern Protestants think finally of preaching. Preaching as we understand it today has a large measure of reason and argument in it, but we believe that the spirit goes with the word, and this means that the man is ultimately addressed at a deeper level than his conscious reason and will. The word which is a purely natural and physical thing, breath, the natural mode of communication among human beings, becomes the vehicle of something which is above reason, becomes symbolic in the true sense, and so carries into a purely natural situation something that is supernatural.

Thus speech is a natural and physical thing in the first instance, part of our natural existence, and our Protestant religion assumes that nature can become a vehicle of grace which lifts men up into the divine life. In the sacraments, the presence of nature is still more recognized; actual physical things like water and bread and wine are so used that they speak of something far beyond nature. Methodists have always understood the redemption of the natural in the realm of the physical word, but whether they have radically understood it in the realm of the physical elements used in the sacraments is another matter.

Now to consider the Lord's Supper. You will forgive me if I approach the matter in a somewhat unfamiliar way. In a certain sense the human being is caught in a cycle. The natural world moves in a cycle: we have spring and summer and autumn and winter, seedtime and harvest, and so on. Man in a certain sense is a part of nature and he also moves in a cycle, that of birth and growth and marriage and generation and decay and death.

The cycle in which man is caught conditions his imagination. It furnishes him with all kinds of images which speak to him in a way that is beyond reason, pictures and symbols which control him in spite of himself. Man's mind and understanding have grown out of these things and they are at the root of all his conscious thinking. Before man heard of the death and resurrection of Jesus, he had seen the sun set and rise again, and known the rebirth of spring. Before he heard of spiritual food, he knew what it was to have his life sustained by physical food. Before he heard of the pearl of great price, he had been attracted by precious stones which had a magical effect upon him. Before he had heard of the Good Shepherd, he knew the natural shepherd, and before he had heard of the true vine, he had drunk of the fruit of the grape. He had seen physical death before he understood spiritual death. Man comes to consciousness in the natural cycle, and his unconscious is full of these images and the needs rising from them. It is true that these images become distorted because man is not what he should be, and they attach themselves to wrong objects; if a man cannot find the bread of God he will try mescaline, and if he does not know the Good Shepherd he will try Hitler or Stalin. But nevertheless these images are there, and man's spiritual and psychological health depend on acknowledging them.

If, therefore, man is to be redeemed, these images have to be redeemed too, by another kind of life. They must carry not only their natural significance, which is liable to distortion, but also the true life; or else how is the natural man to be redeemed? The natural images of which man's imagination is full are highly charged with life force and want to move somewhere, and unless they are redeemed they move to distortion and death.

In biblical religion, and especially in the New Testament, this natural cycle

is cut into by something quite different. The Bible does not think in cycles, except in a few instances where ancient philosophical thought is speaking, as in the Book of Ecclesiastes; it thinks in terms of a transcendent future. The whole of history and the universe itself is moving to some great judgement and redemption of God. This means that it does not regard nature as a mere cycle complete in itself, or the images that are in the mind of man as sufficient in themselves, or human life as something self-contained and self-explanatory, but that it sees all these things being drawn forward by God's purpose into something transcendent. Nature and the spirit of man are being drawn out of their natural condition and their subsequent distortions through sin, into the redemption of God. That is the characteristic of the eschatological outlook which conditions the whole of the New Testament. Nature is not sufficient of itself, and it has been distorted by the doings of man; nevertheless, it was created good, and there is something in it which, touched by Grace, becomes the vehicle of redemption. In a certain sense Grace is already present in the natural thing, but the natural thing also needs to be touched by the Word of Grace to be the vehicle that it should be. Now the chief wonder in creation is the body of man, man in his natural condition. Here something that is part of creation has achieved independence and free will, and moves in the midst of creation without being completely of it. The whole of nature is contained in some sense in man, and yet at this point it transcends itself. The whole biblical message is that man is being redeemed out of the cycle of nature, and that his whole condition is to be lifted into another realm.

How does the Bible say this is to be done? The answer is '*through Christ*', and here comes the significance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Here the natural man partakes of the supernatural body of the Lord, and so is lifted into another realm. This partaking of the supernatural body is mediated through natural things—namely, through the bread and the wine. This means that the natural man, by means of natural things which have a character of archetypal symbolism (which is a necessity of his soul), is able to feed on the body of Christ. Obviously the physical body of Jesus is inaccessible to us, and what is meant here is the body of the Risen Christ. What matters to us is the Life which transcended the tomb, and which is the prime necessity of every human being, although he must partake of it in his own way. This Life is not a matter, in the first instance, of morality, nor is it a matter of clever understanding and insight; it is something that is *given*, something that we *share*, something that we *feed upon*.

There is a great deal of heart-searching in some Jungian circles as to whether the idea of integration and that of holiness can be squared with each other. They certainly cannot if holiness is taken as merely some kind of superior moral will. But holiness is not primarily a matter of moral action; it is a *state*, a life that draws its sustenance from the right source. The roots must be put right before the branches can be healthy. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a supreme act of integration, where what is instinctive and archetypal in man is joined to the Grace of God and transmuted into another kind of life. The natural and supernatural become *one food*. By the Grace of God man is nourished by supernatural food while he partakes of something natural. It is true that man's understanding and will are appealed to in the Communion

Service, and this is completely as it should be. But Communion transcends this; it is a feeding through natural things on another kind of life. It thus meets the need of the whole man, of something that is beyond both will and reason; it feeds the whole man, and speaks not only to the conscious elements in him, but also to the archetypal depths. To my mind it has supreme integrative power, and is a true symbol (in the Jungian sense of something that can only be partially understood), because it speaks to the unconscious as well as the conscious, and meets an unconscious need with divine grace.

Protestantism has never been able to formulate a satisfactory attitude to the Sacraments; it has never really understood the necessity for meeting the natural depths of the soul. It originated in a proper protest against the Roman attitude, which exploited the desire that is in man for the magical, and raised up natural things as valid in their own power and authority, without relating them to the word of Grace in an intelligible fashion, thus making them idols. Yet there is something in the Roman Catholic sacramental attitude which tugs at the human heartstrings. There is needed a new attitude to what is natural and inherent in man, so that it can be fulfilled and redeemed through the gospel. Men and women need a proper fulfilment of their deep unconscious needs and the sacraments can give it. But our teaching about them should not be on magical lines, but along the psychological line that I have indicated.

Methodism has made Holy Communion a mere addition to other services; but if the basic need of man is not just understanding and moralism, but a new kind of integrated life which includes his unconscious desires, this attitude will have to be drastically changed. The basic need of modern man is to get right in his deep instinctive life, and this Sacrament is the great symbol and means by which this need is met in Christianity.

ERASTUS EVANS

THOMAS JOHN BARNARDO (1845-1905)

FIFTY YEARS ago there died in Surbiton, worn out with service for the children he loved, one of the greatest philanthropists and social reformers of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Dr Barnardo's career, indeed, bore some resemblance to that of his friend and patron, Lord Shaftesbury, for both dedicated their lives to helping destitute children. Both were in advance of their age in awakening the public conscience to the awful plight and conditions in which many children existed over eighty years ago.

The chief force which moulded Barnardo's character and influenced his life was undoubtedly his religion. It inspired him in his arduous work in starting the Homes, and sustained him through all the difficulties and vicissitudes of his life. It made him bring to his endeavours all the ardour and zeal of the missionary and the crusader.

Although his family was of Spanish origin, the blood of at least nine nationalities pulsed in his veins. He was born in Dublin (4th July 1845). As a baby he became seriously ill and nearly died; indeed, the doctors actually supposed him dead. However, when the undertaker was preparing his body for burial, he was amazed to discover that the infant still breathed. Later he became a sturdy boy.

In his early life he was hot-tempered, self-willed, and rather imperious. It would seem as if before he was seventeen he was more interested in agnosticism than Christianity. He scoffed at religion, and may have been influenced by the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Paine. But his life was completely changed by the religious revival which swept through Northern and Southern Ireland from 1859 onwards. In 1862 he accompanied two of his brothers to a meeting in Dublin at which John Hambleton gave a stirring address. On reaching home he retired alone to his own room, but long after midnight he entered the bedroom of two of his brothers 'in great distress of soul'. So, said one of them afterwards, we all 'knelt together and cried to God . . . and He graciously heard, and light and joy and peace there and then filled his heart. We all rose from our knees rejoicing and thanking God.'

On his conversion Barnardo became an ardent Christian. He first gained experience in social service work as a teacher in a Dublin Ragged School. He also conducted Bible classes for children and, together with his brothers, Evangelistic services. At this stage of his development he determined to become a missionary to China. For this purpose he came to London. He found a room in the East End, where he continued with eagerness his Ragged Schools endeavours, and he was often found preaching the gospel in the highways and byways. When he was twenty-one he was persuaded by a friend to study medicine, and indeed he possessed many of the special gifts required for a *medical* missionary. In 1866 he entered the London Hospital as a student, and when the terrible cholera outbreak of that year raged in London, he volunteered and rendered splendid service. Eventually he qualified as a doctor.

It is said that the young evangelist's bitter experiences in East London partly persuaded him that his real life-work lay among poor, homeless children rather than in China. In those early years there must have been a conflict in

his mind about which was the more urgent work. Even after he finally gave up his ambition to become a missionary in China, it was a hard decision. But he always regarded his work on behalf of destitute children in the light of a missionary enterprise.

He was known as the 'young man with a lantern', and his habit of sallying forth into the dark winter nights gave him an intimate knowledge of London's underworld. One exceptionally cold night he was horrified to discover some boys sleeping out upon an iron roof. At a meeting held at the Agricultural Hall, Barnardo, who was an eloquent speaker, told his audience about his experiences. About this time he made an influential friend, Lord Shaftesbury, the 'Emancipator of Industrial England'. One dark night Barnardo proved to the philanthropist and a party of rather sceptical friends the seriousness of the problem. In the neighbourhood of the Billingsgate Market he pulled out from under tarpaulins and other places seventy-three boys. The party adjourned to an all-night coffee-shop known as 'Dick Fisher's', where the small boys fell wolfishly upon the coffee and sausages supplied at Lord Shaftesbury's expense.

Shaftesbury was deeply impressed. Addressing his friends, he said: 'Public opinion alone can cure this ghastly ill. . . . I will see that all London knows of what we experienced tonight', and he said to Barnardo: 'You hope to go as a missionary to China. But pray earnestly over the events of this night. It may be that God is calling you to labour as His chosen missionary upon the homeless children of this Metropolis.' Thus, under the guidance and inspiration of the great philanthropist, Barnardo started his first Home for Homeless Boys in Stepney Causeway. Today—much enlarged—it still remains the headquarters of Dr Barnardo's Homes.

Naturally, there were many frustrating difficulties: lack of funds, the ignorance, apathy, and scepticism of evilly-disposed people who tried to denigrate Barnardo's character, and the strain and worry of expanding the work. Yet the dynamic doctor was fortunate in the numbers of generous supporters who believed in him from the beginning.

Today a large sign surmounts the doorway: 'NO DESTITUTE CHILD EVER REFUSED ADMISSION.' It early became the charter of the Homes. It is related how Dr Barnardo was once most reluctantly compelled to turn away a small boy called 'Carrots' from Stepney Causeway. There was—alas!—no vacant accommodation. He asked him to return in a week. Unfortunately, the small boy died during the next few days. Barnardo's compassionate nature was deeply affected by this tragedy. He made the solemn vow never again to turn away a destitute boy.

In 1871 Lord Shaftesbury asked Barnardo to study the records of 'his children's' histories and compile statistics to show the *causes* of their destitution. In the course of his researches Barnardo ascertained that no less than 85 per cent. owed their social ruin to the drinking habits of their parents, grandparents, or other relations. His book, *Something Attempted, Something Done*, provides factual proof. Barnardo himself was so shocked by this revelation that he became a teetotaler.

In 1873, largely owing to the generosity of his supporters, Barnardo was able to buy the 'Edinburgh Castle' public house, where a Commemoration Service to mark the fiftieth anniversary of his death was held this year. The

'Edinburgh Castle' was formerly a gin-palace with a most unenviable reputation. Under his guidance it became the People's Mission Church. Part of the premises, known as the Coffee Palace, became a most successful social centre.

In his marriage with Miss Elmslie, daughter of a wealthy businessman, Barnardo found an ideal helpmate. It may not be realized that many of the destitute children rescued by the Homes were, in fact, girls. But soon after his marriage in 1873, his first 'village houses' for girls were founded at Barking-side, Essex. These 'cottage houses' expanded, and at his death nearly seventy cottages had been erected.

From the beginning, Dr Barnardo was particularly interested in the health of 'his children'. Believing, like St Paul, that the human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, he regarded it as a religious duty to see that 'his children' were properly fed and clothed. His special tenderness was for crippled children.

Training boys for useful occupations and trades was his particular concern. Workshops were instituted at Stepney Causeway, where they were taught carpentry, printing, boot-making, and other skilled jobs. Two years before his death he founded the Watts Naval Training School, where boys were trained for the Royal Navy. This school, situated at Elmham, Norfolk, not far from Sandringham, was originally a county agricultural school. It was opened by Edward VII, when Prince of Wales. It failed, however, in its original purpose and was forced to close down. In 1901 it became the property of a shipowner named Edmund Watts, who, after spending thousands of pounds on it, gave it to Dr Barnardo as a naval training centre. The Watts School is now known as the Parkstone Sea Training School.

Barnardo was among the early pioneers who realized that migration to the Dominions offered a splendid opportunity for the destitute child, if he was properly trained. Actually, two remarkable women, Annie MacPherson and Mrs Birt, began this work. In 1870 they organized the first party of juveniles ever landed on Canadian soil. In the course of many years Barnardo sent over 29,000 children to Canada. His policy was to board out in families children under fourteen. When selecting parties for emigration, he was always careful to choose those with fine characters and robust health. Even after the children had been placed out with Canadian families he exercised supervision over them. If any of them failed as emigrants, Barnardo was willing to safeguard their return by paying their passage home.

Barnardo anticipated the modern National Health Insurance when, in the heart of the East End, he instituted medical missions which provided free medical and nursing attention. In 1882 he proposed a scheme of 'First Aid to Starving Infants', which foreshadowed our present infant clinics.

As a result of the enmity of his critics, the doctor was unfortunately engaged for some years in litigation. Ultimately this produced beneficial results, and several Acts of Parliament were passed. One was the Custody of Children Act (1891), which removed from parents who abandoned their children all parental authority. Another was the Poor Law Act (1889), which transferred to the Guardians of the parish parental authority and rights over the deserted children they had supported.

In his own life, Barnardo suffered bereavements which must have taxed his

acutely sensitive spirit. Three of his five sons preceded him to the grave. Writing in *Night and Day* (the official organ of Dr Barnardo's Homes) he remarked: 'This loss has only intensified my desire to continue that work of child-rescue committed to my care.' The importance of his work can be appreciated when it is realized that by 1905 he had rescued 60,000 children and instituted homes in many industrial towns and parts of the country.

By temperament he was endowed with quick perception, imagination, striking originality, and courage; he had immense organizing ability and was a terrific worker. But it must be admitted that he had the faults of greatness; he was autocratic, impetuous, inclined to be impatient of restraint, and sometimes exacting to his associates. His personality was such that nobody could feel neutral towards him. Mostly, people loved him, but a few disliked him for his independence of spirit and hatred of sham and humbug. Like all great souls, he never felt hatred or rancour against his enemies; he always maintained, like President Lincoln, 'malice towards none, and charity towards all'.

Every power of Barnardo's mind was harnessed to the service of 'his children'. In his practical Christianity he obeyed the words of our Lord: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'

Towards the end, Dr Barnardo suffered from heart attacks, the penalty of a too active life. But his steadfast faith sustained him even at the gates of death. Winston Churchill, broadcasting on the death of the late King George VI, spoke memorable words: 'The King walked with death, as if death were a companion, an acquaintance, whom he recognized and did not fear.' Dr Barnardo likewise walked with death as if death were a companion, and felt no fear.

BRYAN BEVAN

S.K.—A STRANGE SAINT

HOW SLOW the world is to recognize its truly great men! A hundred years ago, in November 1855, that 'tremendous little Dane', Søren Kierkegaard ('S.K.' to many of us) passed away at the age of forty-three. 'My life will cry out after I am dead', he had written, and now at last his genius is being acknowledged, his fiery challenge felt amidst the breaking of nations that he foretold. Thanks to the heroic labours of Walter Lowrie of America and to Alexander Dru of Europe, to name only two, we can read S.K.'s own words and also a vast amount of comment thereon.

As for his personal history, that is soon told; the real events of such lives are always inward. Perhaps there were only three main 'events', three great influences: the death of his father, his own love-affair, and the final crusade against the established order in Church and State. A sketch still preserved, obviously a caricature, suggests that S.K. was something of an oddity; probably some spinal injury affected his gait and bearing. His mother died early; his elderly father's influence was very powerful (in modern jargon you might call it a 'father-fixation'); and there was certainly a melancholy strain, if not actually something morbid, in his nature. He felt there was a 'family curse' overshadowing him and for this strange reason: the father confessed on his death-bed that once, when as a poor boy he was sent out to labour in the fields, he had looked up and cursed God for allowing a little child to suffer, and he believed that God had strangely *punished* him by letting him become rich and prosperous! Probably there was also a secret concerning a sexual lapse, but in any case we know enough to guess at the effect upon the highly sensitive son. An 'abnormal psychosis' was the result; here was another 'Hamlet, the melancholy Dane', obsessed with the ghost of a parent's guilt.

One compensation, on the surface at least, was that S.K., the son of a well-to-do father, was able to enjoy several years of leisured study at the University of Copenhagen. It was vaguely assumed that he would carry out his father's wish and take Orders in the State Church; but his brilliant gifts were devoted to literature and art, a general Humanism. Religion also attracted him; he was not a Christian, and in general enjoyed life as a 'moneyed worldling', but without yielding to coarser temptations. Then began one of the strangest love-stories in the world, his engagement to a beautiful girl, Regina Olsen. The match seemed entirely suitable, but the young S.K., feeling himself utterly unworthy, decided he must give her up. Worse still, he suddenly went off to continue his studies in Berlin, and whilst there he actually persuaded some friends at home to circulate false tales that he was leading a gay life, hoping that this would turn the girl's mind against him. In the end she was happily married to a prominent Danish official, but it is clear that S.K. really cherished a lifelong devotion to his early love. In fact it was a true parallel to the Dante and Beatrice story.

Already at twenty-one he had begun the wonderful journals at which he laboured year after year, almost day and night, the unique attempt of a strangely gifted soul to record his inner life. He wrote as a layman, anxious to find out what exactly the Christian religion should mean for those professing it. Only when he was thirty-six did he himself definitely claim to be a Christian, 'a

writer in God's service'. The titles of his books, put out under various pseudonyms and at his own expense, are revealing: *Fear and Trembling*, *The Concept of Dread*, *Either—Or*, etc. It was all leading up to the question as to what Christianity should mean for the established order—in particular for the State clergy.

At last came the dramatic break; the mask was off, this timid recluse launched his crusade, a bold challenge on behalf of 'real Christianity'. As Dr Lowrie says, Luther had his ninety-five theses, but for S.K. there was only one: 'Christianity no longer exists.' 'Introducing Christianity to Christendom', making Christians Christians—that must be the task, to offer this 'radical cure'. If only the clergy would be honest and admit that they knew what the Christian religion was, but were not prepared to carry it out! Like another Socrates, whom he called 'Intellectuality's martyr', S.K. was to be a self-devoted martyr to his religious convictions. He became the object of bitter persecution and public ridicule. The world seems to be ready always for the old game (to quote John Masefield), 'Making hell for all the odd: All the lonely ones of God'. The bitter feud came to a head in the *Corsair*, a leading journal which publicly attacked and lampooned this disturber of the peace. S.K. died only a few years later in his forty-third year, despised and rejected, poor and forsaken, leaving barely enough to cover his funeral expenses. But the end was joy, as he declared, joy unspeakable; the poor wounded soul was free at last from all unrest and deep questioning. He passionately asserted his certainty of God's Fatherly love in Jesus Christ. The Editor of the *Corsair* declared, in a belated tribute, that it was time for him to die, because popularity was the very last thing he could endure.

Now, after 100 years, Kirkegaard is recognized as a religious genius, a great and growing influence in the religious world. Barth, Brunner, and Buber, to name only three, are obviously indebted to one who was a powerful and subtle thinker, theologian, psychologist, and above all a saint. In all his writings, in spite of the endless introspection, the tormented unrest, there is the mystery of simplicity, the simplicity that is in Christ. If, as a modern critic says, the essential flame of Christianity is always in danger of being smothered in the smoke of metaphysics, S.K. insists that *faith* is the supreme adventure, an immediate revelation, 'a fighting certainty, the leap in the dark!' It is the 'existential leap' of the spirit from the finite to the infinite, to an entirely different order of being. Hegel's bloodless ballet of categories, the abstract reasoning of philosophy, dogmatics, and apologetics, the argument from history—all these are powerless to establish 'first-hand faith', for that is something essentially unique, not derived from anything.

Thus we are helped with the very difficult problem of time and eternity, the finite and the infinite. Here is the answer to Lessing's contention, that no event in *time* could possibly prove *eternal* truth. But when God entered humanity in the Person of Christ, the eternal was touching time uniquely, although not confined to that moment. So by a living faith you must be 'contemporaneous', 'In relation to the absolute there is only one tense, the present'. Hence the 'paradox', as S.K. says, the *offence* of the God-man; Christ had to be always at the mercy of His *incognito*; His true disciples must also share in that same 'offence'. 'Christianity has always gone through the world between

two thieves.' He insists on the truth, that the kind of knowledge given by faith is entirely distinct from all abstract thinking; it is the personal response of the self to the initiative of the Eternal, the personal invitation of God. There is this transcendental relationship of the '*Thou*' over against our '*I*'. Truth, he says, is 'Inwardness, that which edifies *you*', this personal response to a personal challenge. We hear much of 'Existentialism' today, the theory attributed to Kierkegaard by many; but, according to some of his best exponents, it seems doubtful whether he himself would have countenanced this. Perhaps he would prefer to call it simply the truth of 'individual existence' and its meaning for Christianity.

Here, in conclusion, is a particular word from S.K. for the preacher. He would like to have, inside every pulpit, where only the preacher could see it, these words: 'How dreadful is this place!'; and on the outside, where the worshippers could see it plainly, the words: 'If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.' He was indeed a strange saint, a rare spirit, one of those who seem 'marked out for sacrifice'—as he puts it, 'the little pinch of spice', 'the touch of red'.

CHARLES GIMBLETT

GEORGE CRABBE— 'NATURE'S STERNEST PAINTER AND THE BEST'

THERE IS some doubt about the exact date of George Crabbe's birth, but it took place in the small Suffolk coast town of Aldeburgh in either 1754 or 1755. In his lifetime, he rose from penury to plenty. Called a 'lubber' and a 'fool' by the seafaring inhabitants, he became a successful poet, with some of the most famous men of his day as his close and intimate friends.

Though he hated his birthplace, he seemed unable to get away from the bleak shore, the marshes and the wind-swept commons he knew so well. In later life, he often lived in more beautiful places, but the everchanging aspects of the North Sea fascinated him and coloured all his poetry.

He was never a sailor—his father, indeed, complained that he was useless in a boat—so he left his native place, and went as surgeon's apprentice, first to Wickhambrook, near Newmarket, where his bedfellow and companion was a ploughboy, and later to Woodbridge, near Ipswich.

Not finding much benefit from his medical apprenticeships, he returned to Aldeburgh to work for his father. Dressed as a warehouseman, he was rolling casks of butter on the quay when he received a visit from a former friend who had become a smart young doctor. This friend reproved him for submitting to such a menial task, but, though deeply hurt, he refused to oppose his father's wishes.

At last he determined to 'go to London and venture all'. There he hoped to

gain further medical knowledge. Borrowing five pounds from a friend, he arrived in London with only three pounds as his entire fortune. In his lodgings, he narrowly escaped serious trouble. His landlady found in the cupboard a dead body for dissection, which she imagined to be her own baby who had died the previous week. She was certain he had dug it up, and could hardly be convinced of his innocence.

His father had subscribed to a periodical which sometimes contained a page of poems which George soon knew by heart. He was for ever rhyming, and once received a small prize for a poem called 'Hope'. Writing became a master passion, and while he was in London he wrote a poem called 'The Candidate', which was published. In this realm also, however, ill-fortune pursued him; his publisher failed, and poor Crabbe received nothing for his work.

In answer to an advertisement for an amanuensis, he walked twelve miles to apply for the position, only to be told 'the gentleman was provided'. Misfortune seemed to dog every step. He applied to Lords North, Thurlow and Selburne in vain.

There came such a lean time that he had to pawn his books, his instruments, and other articles. He could not very well sell the clothes he stood up in; but he would not have got very much for them if he had done so, for his coat was torn, though he had mended it himself as best he could. He wrote in his diary:

I have sold my wardrobe, pawned my watch, and am in debt to my landlord, and at some loss to eat a week longer.

But he went on writing.

He was now in great distress, and decided on one more effort. He waited on Edmund Burke, then one of England's greatest figures, and for once he was received most kindly. Though Burke was by no means well off, that interview was the turning-point of Crabbe's life. He had only eightpence halfpenny when he went in, but came out with his genius acknowledged by one whose judgement was unchallenged.

Gilfillan in his *Literary Portraits* wrote of Burke:

Who has forgot his fatherly interest in poor Crabbe: that flower blushing and drooping unseen until Burke lifted up his hand and gave his protégé bread and immortality.

His benefactor invited him to his country seat at Beaconsfield, and introduced him to Fox, Reynolds, and other distinguished people. He met Dr Johnson at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, and, though he was greeted with an unfavourable growl, the Doctor later made abundant amends and invited him to Bolt Court.

The publication of *The Library* was a great success, and brought Crabbe no little fame; but the monetary result was very small, and he was still in deep financial distress. Then Lord Thurlow, at whose door he had once knocked in vain, invited him to breakfast, and handed him a sealed packet. The poet hopefully thought it might be a gift of ten or even twenty pounds, and was astonished to find a banknote for one hundred pounds, which relieved him of immediate anxiety about the future. Crabbe never forgot this generous action, and ever sought out others who were in need, and helped them.

Knowing Crabbe's leanings towards the Church, Burke persuaded the Bishop of Norwich to ordain him, and he then became curate of Aldeburgh. It was not a wise appointment, for his parishioners were scarcely disposed to welcome a curate known to them as a former 'noodle' and 'fool', and he was not received too well.

Then Burke exerted himself again, and the Duke of Rutland appointed him as chaplain at Belvoir Castle, where he lived from 1782 until 1789, dining daily at the Duke's table. There, in comfort and with leisure, he published *The Village* in 1783. Johnson, no mean critic, read it with delight, and pronounced it to be 'original, vigorous and elegant'.

In due course, he became incumbent of several other parishes, and, finally, in 1814, settled as Rector of Trowbridge, where he lived until his death in 1832. In 1817 came his last and some of his finest work, *Tales of the Hall*, for which John Murray gave him three thousand pounds—a large sum in those days. From that time there was no need to worry about money.

After his death, the parishioners easily raised amongst themselves a sum large enough to erect the monument which is over his grave in the chancel of the church. They refused any contribution from members of the family, because they wished 'to testify their regard to him as a friend and minister'. Byron was one of those who greatly admired his poetry, and the words, 'Nature's sternest painter and the best', from his tribute in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, are inscribed on the monument.

A highlight in Crabbe's life was an invitation to visit Scott in Edinburgh. His works were more often in Sir Walter's hands in his latter days than any others except Shakespeare, and the Bible and Crabbe were the only books he ever called for as his life drew to its close. But in his appreciation of Crabbe he was only one distinguished critic among many. Wordsworth, Cardinal Newman, Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review*, and Horace Smith were among those who delighted in his work, and many years later Thomas Hardy acknowledged his influence on the realism of his novels.

Crabbe wrote of the seamy side of life, but never sought for it with prurient curiosity. The poet of the poor, he vividly depicted all their virtues and vicissitudes. His writing was not without humour, and he was one of the greatest masters of the realistic in our literature. But although a great and applauded favourite with the critics, he was largely ignored by the general public. He has been called the 'Chaucer of his age', an age which has long since vanished out of recognition.

F. P. GENT

PRISON VISITATION IN THE METHODIST REVIVAL

*What word of grace in such a place
Could help a brother's soul?*

OSCAR WILDE: *The Ballad of Reading Gaol.*

*He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free.*

CHARLES WESLEY.

THE PARISH Church of Pickering, in Yorkshire, contains a series of remarkable frescoes, from which the unlettered folk of five hundred years ago would learn their duties toward God and their neighbours. Here are depicted those everyday acts of mercy set out in the 'Parable of the Great Surprise' (Mt 25₃₁₋₄₆), thus to impress upon the congregation that the visitation of prisoners was to be undertaken as an accepted part of Christian service.

Today it may seem an outmoded obligation, though not if we regard it, as did the early Methodists, as providing a unique opportunity for preaching the Gospel.

The prisoner's lot in the eighteenth century was grim. Some prisons, and chiefly those privately owned, were miserably small and underground, and might be old towers or castles, or even the dark, filthy cellars of public houses. They were so inadequate that it was necessary to load prisoners with irons to prevent their escape. Those buildings which were designed for the purpose were guaranteed to quench the spirit of any who had previously met their lot with fortitude. Of the old cells in Newgate John Howard wrote:

Criminals who had affected an air of boldness during their trial, and appeared quite unconcerned at the pronouncing sentence upon them, were struck dumb with horror, and shed tears, when brought to these darksome dungeons.

Prisons were damp, ill-lit, ill-ventilated and insanitary. The allowance of food was scanty, and there was often no supply of water and no straw to sleep on. The sick were uncared for and unattended, and many died while awaiting their trial.

Prisons were notoriously overcrowded with, at times, the wives and children of prisoners huddled in as well as the wrongdoers, and lodging as many as ten or twelve persons in a medium-size room. But congestion was chiefly due to two other factors: an outdated criminal code and an ineffective system of justice. By prescribing savage penalties for countless minor offences, the law encouraged thieves and criminals to make wrongdoing worth their while, and thus defeated its purpose as a deterrent. The offences for which men and women were liable to imprisonment were chiefly debt and theft, and these often of the most trivial nature (Dickens speaks of 'the famished wretch whose theft had been a loaf of bread, or scrap of butcher's meat');¹ and the deeds for which they were executed numbered over one hundred and sixty, and included picking a pocket of anything over a shilling, and stealing a horse or a sheep.

Prisoners were confined for months, even years, before their trial. The claim made by Sir John Fielding, the noted magistrate, in 1752, was no exaggeration of the situation in London:

For a theft of twopence or threepence a poor wretch may lie starving and confined in gaol nearly two months in this town, and in the country above half a year, before he is brought to trial.²

Even worse than this, prisoners who had been declared innocent were often dragged back to gaol and detained until they could pay the accumulated fees demanded by the gaolers.

The gaolers themselves were mostly disreputable characters, whose cruel tactics were based on intrigue and cunning. Some were non-resident, and others no more than jobbers, dependent for their livelihood on bribes, tips, fees and extortions. Among their most lucrative sources of revenue were profits on the open sale of liquor and on the covert permission of prostitution, and weekly charges for what was known as 'release from chains'. The evils multiplied. The filth and stench bred diseases as lethal as the hangman's rope, chiefly smallpox and the gaol-fever, and these were spread by visitors, discharged prisoners, and those who appeared in court. Of gaol-fever, which Stowe in his *Survey* calls 'the Sickness of the house', Howard reports:

From my own observations in 1773 and 1774 I was fully convinced that many more were destroyed by it than were put to death by all the public executions in the Kingdom.

The idleness and turmoil bred immorality and debauchery. Smollett maintained that in 1750 English gaols 'were filled with the refuse of the Army and Navy',³ and conditions were aggravated by herding all types of culprits together — 'debtors and felons, men and women, the petty offender and the most profligate, even idiots and lunatics at times'.⁴

The prevailing contemporary attitude to the prisoner's fate was one of callous indifference. One has only to look at Hogarth's famous etching, 'On the Way to Tyburn', to see this. The prisoner, in a tumbrel, is seen approaching the gallows amidst a vast rabble of excited spectators, and for those who enjoy comfort and can afford it, a special gallery has been provided. Some are making the most of their opportunity to sell gin or 'death speeches'; the majority are merely satisfying their basest impulses.

Into Hogarth's coarse and brutal world there suddenly stepped a sensitive Oxford scholar. Charles Wesley's *Journal* for 10th July 1738 contains an account of his first visit to Newgate. He tells us that he 'preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death'. He had not come willingly. He harboured serious doubts about the possibility of a death-bed repentance. Could one hope to see God's mercy revealed in the lives of those whose time was so short? But he accepted the invitation of Mr Sparks, one of the visiting ministers of Newgate, and went with Mr Bray and Mr Burnham. He found, however, that his weakness of faith and hope had left room for God's surprise, for he writes:

In the midst of my languid discourse, a sudden spirit of faith came upon me, and I promised them all pardon, in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would, as at the last hour, repent and believe the Gospel.

He knew 'who is sufficient for these things', and continues, in tones of inspired certainty:

Nay I did believe they would accept of the proffered mercy, and could not help telling them, 'I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them'.

His fearless assurance was more than justified. Day by day we follow him on his visits to the condemned felons, where he preached 'with earnestness', prayed, and administered the sacrament. The Spirit of God worked mightily in that place. We share his wondering joy as one by one he led the malefactors to Christ. On 17th July he found himself 'overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners', and on the following day he experienced 'one of the most triumphant hours I have ever known'. This was on the eve of their execution. At night Charles and Mr Bray were locked in a cell with the men who were to die. Charles administered the sacrament to them, having beforehand instructed them in the nature of it. Each man in turn knew Christ as his Saviour and his sins washed away by the blood of the Crucified—'All delightfully cheerful. . . Joy was visible in all their faces.'

The next day the men were executed at Tyburn. Charles visited them for the last time, and at six prayed and sang with them all together. With three others he went by coach to be with 'the children appointed to die' to the end. It was an unforgettable experience for him, and his account of it, written with restraint though it is, does not conceal the depth of his emotion:

They were all cheerful; full of comfort, peace and triumph; assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them, and waited to receive them into paradise.

Among them was 'the poor black that had robbed his master'. Because he was sick, he had been separated from the other prisoners in Newgate, and confined in the 'condemned hole'. Charles showed him especial consideration, and on 15th July had the joy of knowing that he believed that 'the Son of God loved him, and gave Himself for him'. At Tyburn, 'my poor happy black' smiled with 'the most composed, delightful countenance I ever saw'.

None showed any natural terror of death; no fear or crying or tears. . . . I never saw such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. . . . I could do nothing but rejoice. . . . We left them going to meet their Lord, ready for the Bridegroom.

This culmination to Charles's visits to Newgate left him 'full of peace and confidence in our friends' happiness'. He declares: 'That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life.'

Only two months before this the Spirit of God had triumphed in his own life, and he already began to feel a divine impetus to win others for his Lord. We may see the pattern of these events repeated in his account of visits he paid to prisoners in Cardiff on 11th and 12th September 1741.

The experiences through which he passed, when face to face with men on the brink of eternity, awoke in him the passion of an evangelist.⁵

Referring now to John Wesley's *Journal* we read in the entry for 17th September 1738: 'I began again to declare in my own country the glad tidings of Salvation, preaching three times.' Two days later: 'I went to the condemned felons in Newgate, and offered them free salvation.' Again on 23rd September he writes: 'I was enabled to speak strong words . . . at Newgate.' The two brothers are there together later the same year. On 7th November John tells us they are pointing the condemned felons to the only Saviour of sinners, and the next day, at the prisoners' earnest request, they accompany them to Tyburn. Of the condemned men he declares:

It was the most glorious instance I ever saw of faith triumphing over sin and death.

Thus, with the 'helpful ministry' of their personal records, we trace the Wesleys' constant concern for the spiritual needs of prisoners. It was no new concern. As early as 1730 they had gone regularly to the Castle and the Bocardo in Oxford, when as members of the Holy Club, William Morgan had persuaded them of the urgent need for prison visitation. Even then they had paid particular attention to prisoners condemned to death.

Their zeal to convert the prisoners never flagged, and any opposition only seemed to confirm their determination to continue. In January and February 1743 Charles Wesley suffered a series of rebuffs from the keepers at Newgate, who accused him of forging his papers of admittance, and confiscated the order issued to him by the Sheriff. After an altercation with the head gaoler, his unshaken resolve remains: 'Let the world smile or frown, my work goes on.'

Over forty years later John Wesley is in Newgate with the same message to declare. On 26th December 1785 he preached the condemned criminals' sermon. There were forty-seven under sentence of death in his congregation, but 'no sound was heard, either from them or the crowded audience, after the text was named'. It was Lk 15₁₀: 'The power of the Lord was eminently present, and most of the prisoners were in tears.'

His witness among prisoners was not confined to London, and his *Journal* substantiates Dr Simon's claim that 'few clergymen had a wider experience of prison preaching'. In one period of nine months he preached at least sixty-seven times in various gaols. In his *Spiritual Diary and Soliloquies*, Dr Rutty records:

Fourth month, 1762, 14—an Interview with J. Wesley. . . . A particular account of the conversion of two hundred malefactors in Newgate.⁶

In that other Newgate in Bristol he also won many a victory for his Lord, and it was there that he was inspired to declare the universality of Christ's redemption in spite of himself. In his entry for 25th April 1739 are these significant words:

While I was preaching I was insensibly led . . . to declare strongly and explicitly that 'God willeth all men thus to be saved'. . . . In the evening I was again pressed

in spirit to declare that 'Christ gave Himself a ransom for all', and almost before we called upon Him to set His seal He answered.

John Wesley encouraged all his preachers, when they were permitted to do so, to visit and minister to the needs of prisoners. Many of the early Methodists maintained and extended this service at great personal sacrifice. Let us take four representatives from among their number who were fired with that missionary enthusiasm which characterized the Evangelical Revival.

It is well-known that George Eliot based the character Dinah Morris, the heroine of *Adam Bede*, on Elizabeth Evans, 'the most celebrated of Methodist woman preachers'. She was born in Leicestershire in 1776 of good Christian parents, and was converted when twenty-one. She longed to undertake some service for her Lord, and it was a tragic prison visit that launched her on a life dedicated to preaching the Gospel. For two years she had felt the compulsion to call sinners to repentance, and in this way God opened a 'great door and effectual' for her. She went with a Miss Richards from Derby to Nottingham, where a mother, who had poisoned her child, lay under sentence of death. Day by day they wrestled for her soul, until the poor creature was converted. Like the Wesleys, Elizabeth tended her to the end, and rode with her in the cart to the place of execution. The event made a deep impression on her. It was a powerful witness to the Spirit of God at work in the life of a common criminal, for 'she died', said Elizabeth, 'almost without a struggle'.⁷

John Valton was accustomed to visit prisoners in Newgate, and, on the day of their execution, to go with them to the gallows. On 7th May 1790, for example, he rode to Tyburn with two clergymen in a coach, and then spent an hour with one McNamara in the cart before his death, which a concourse of twenty thousand had come to enjoy. On 9th July he was again at Tyburn with 'poor Wm Hungerford', who himself offered prayers in the cart and addressed the people 'in a way of warning'. 'Upon the whole, we all seemed to entertain very lively hopes that he went to Abraham's bosom.' Valton himself 'felt much faith and power under the gallows'.⁸

In the entry in John Wesley's *Journal* for 13th November 1748 there is an account of Sarah Peters, 'a lover of souls, a Mother in Israel', whose spirit had but then 'returned to God'. She died of a fever contracted while visiting prisoners in 'the great pest-house of the capital'—Newgate. 'It was her particular gift, and her continual care', he writes, 'to seek and to save that which was lost.' She went constantly to Newgate, sometimes alone, sometimes with companions, and visited all the condemned in their cells. She prayed with them, and exhorted them. She had the comfort of finding them every time more athirst for God than before, and of being followed wherever she went with abundance of prayers and blessings. No more glowing tribute to her gracious influence could have been written.

Silas Told was a fellow-worker with Sarah Peters, and a pioneer of the Prisoners' Aid Society. We are fortunate in having his own account of his work among condemned prisoners, and first-hand evidence to justify John Wesley's claim that in Told's life 'are many remarkable instances of Divine Providence'. He records that it was during a sermon by Wesley on the text, 'I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me not', that he was awakened to his

neglect of this duty, and that two or three days later he had an opportunity of visiting Newgate. During his long ministry he preached in every prison in and about London, and frequently travelled to almost every town within twelve miles of the Metropolis. He introduces us to a whole company of men and women whom he helped, and by doing so, bears modest witness to his persistent and selfless service on behalf of the outcasts.

Among them we may notice young John Lancaster, who had robbed the Foundry one morning of the brass candlesticks, but knew 'that shortly he should be with Jesus in Paradise'; Roberts, a carman, whose 'savage behaviour' was 'transformed into a child-like deportment'; and Harris, the unrepentant highwayman, actually converted by Told in the cart on the way to his execution. Then there is Morgan, one of four men condemned for robbing a farmer near Chelmsford, who was informed of his reprieve, granted by the King through the constant entreaties of his fiancée, Lady Elizabeth Hamilton, just before he reached the gallows. There is Slocomb, a young gentleman who had defrauded his father of three hundred pounds, and who was 'remarkably amiable in his conduct', and 'filled with perfect seriousness and devotion, as he never neglected to attend on the means of grace at every opportunity'. And again there is wanton Mary Piner, sentenced to death for setting fire to her master's house, who found peace with God in prayer on the eve of her execution, and who strengthened her fellow sufferers at the gallows, and declared her assurance of going to 'live with Him who died for me'. And so one could go on. Told left his testimonial in the lives of hundreds of such men and women.

John Wesley more than once protested against the abominable conditions in which prisoners lived, whether in 'a nursery of all manner of wickedness' like the Marshalsea⁹ or in Knowle, near Bristol, where French prisoners were confined during the Seven Years War.¹⁰ It is, however, to be regretted that neither he, nor his early followers, made any organized protest against prison procedure, and that they did not initiate any systematic movement for reform. This should not cloud our gratitude for the glorious example of their devoted pioneer work; but, in retrospect, it must appear that opportunities for effective concerted action were sadly missed.

Activity on behalf of prisoners was not, of course, confined to the Methodists, and to see their work in the context of its time, the achievements of other pioneers must be briefly mentioned.

Samuel Wesley himself, the father of John and Charles, was keenly interested, and gave public expression to his concern in an epic poem called 'The Prisons Opened'. He was an intimate friend of General Oglethorpe, and the epic was written to celebrate the proceedings of the latter's Committee, which was 'appointed to inquire into the state of the Jails of this Kingdom in the year 1729'.

This Committee successively investigated conditions in the Fleet, Marshalsea, and King's Bench Prisons, and reported its findings to the House of Commons. In 1729 an Act was passed for 'the Relief of Debtors, with respect to the Imprisonment of their Persons', and was amplified in the following year. Unfortunately, few of its provisions were properly enforced, but under it, many debtors secured immediate relief. More important than this legislation was the impetus given to reform by the revelations of the Committee, and the widespread public interest aroused. Oglethorpe has deserved a better place

than he has generally been accorded in the history of prison reform, for the appointment and work of the Committee were entirely due to his unremitting efforts.¹¹

The growth of public concern for prisoners was indicated in 1772 by the formation of a 'Society for the Relief of Prisoners imprisoned for small sums'. From 1772-92 it discharged an average of seven hundred prisoners a year, chiefly 'of the description of manufacturers, labourers and seamen', at an average cost of forty-five shillings each. As a result of its activities, an Act of 1781 limited the term of imprisonment for debtors committed by what were known as Courts of Conscience, in London, Middlesex and Surrey, and abolished fees paid by them to the gaolers. In 1786 its provisions were made general.¹²

But the greatest single influence in prison reform during the century was, undoubtedly, the country squire, John Howard (1726?-90). He undertook, at his own expense, four complete tours of English gaols, during seventeen years of solitary crusade, as well as several extensive European expeditions; and in 1777 published his famous book, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales*. He found in them 'a complication of distress'.

Hearing the cries of the multitude [he declared] I devoted my time to their relief. In order to procure it, I made it my business to collect materials, the authenticity of which could not be disputed.

Before he died he had travelled more than fifty thousand miles in the prisoner's cause, and expended some thirty thousand pounds of his own fortune. He had even shut himself up in miserable dungeons to taste for himself the prisoner's lot. He was an exceptional character—combining social position, financial independence, physical hardihood, indomitable will, and amazing pertinacity of purpose. He was, above all, a man of deeply religious feelings, a great friend of John Wesley, and a warm supporter of the Revival's work. It has been said with truth that he never forgot to aim at the reformation of the prisoner, and in the section of his book containing proposals for improvements he gives careful consideration to the provision of opportunities for worship among prisoners. Of the chaplain he writes:

They [i.e. the magistrates] should choose one who is in principle a Christian: who will not content himself with officiating in public; but will converse with the prisoners; admonish the profligate; exhort the thoughtless; comfort the sick; and make known to the condemned the Mercy which is revealed in the Gospel.

This was an ideal of devotion attained nowhere more conspicuously than by the Wesleys and their early followers. Does it not point, indeed, to what was distinctive in their work for prisoners—a passion for the souls of men? Their business was to evangelize, not to investigate; to lead 'the condemned men and women to realize a spiritual emancipation—a deliverance from those unseen bonds which had held their souls in an agony of despair'.¹³

A distinguished critic recently claimed for *Little Dorrit* a place of unique significance among Dickens's novels, because it is 'the most intense and embittered attack on the institutions of society that Dickens ever made—it is the

novel in which the social world is symbolized by a prison'.¹⁴ It was from the bonds that held them captive to this prison-like world that the Methodists laboured to deliver the thieves and criminals; and their aim was to make its prisoner 'the prisoner of the Lord'. Charles Wesley's prayer was for ever on their lips:

*From his sins and bonds release,
Stamp him with the stamp divine,
Thou thy lawful captive seize,
And seal him ever Thine.*

Dr. Newton Flew has reminded us how closely Charles Wesley resembles his Lord in his consorting with the outcasts of society and in his passion to redeem them.¹⁵ This is no accidental similarity. Charles Wesley, as Bernard Manning once said, 'is always at Calvary',¹⁶ and love for the outcasts is a divine quality that steals into the hearts of those who keep near to the Cross of Jesus. There is nothing else that can create genuine compassion for malefactors. There is nothing else that can explain the presence of these Methodists at Newgate and at Tyburn, or that can account for their zeal, their compassion, their heroism, and their triumphs, or that can solve the mystery of how those imprisoned in 'the cave of black Despair' approached the gallows without any sign of discomposure, showed such 'incredible indifference to dying', and went as men 'going to meet their Lord'. Witnessing in a power that was not their own, the Methodists never claimed their victories as their own. They never saw their work otherwise than in terms of a Man on a Cross.

PETER J. COLLINGWOOD

¹ *Barnaby Rudge*, ch. 65.

² Dorothy M. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*, p.324.

³ J. S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism*, p.132.

⁴ John Howard's description.

⁵ J. S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Religious Societies*, p.218. ⁶ *W.H.S.*, VIII.54.

⁷ L. F. Church, *More About the Early Methodist People*, pp.159-61. ⁸ *W.H.S.*, VIII.118-19.

⁹ *Journal*, 3rd February 1753. ¹⁰ *ibid.*, 15th October 1759, 24th October 1760.

¹¹ L. F. Church, *Oglethorpe*, pp.9-24. ¹² Dorothy M. George, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

¹³ L. F. Church, *More About the Earliest Methodist People*, p.196.

¹⁴ Lionel Trilling in the *Listener*, 11th June 1953, p.971.

¹⁵ *The Hymns of Charles Wesley* (1953), p.12.

¹⁶ *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts*, p.43.

THE PREDOMINANCE OF EAR OVER EYE IN THE EXPERIENCE OF ST PAUL

MORE THAN one student of the New Testament has remarked upon the comparative obscurity of many of St Paul's visual analogies. There is the greatest possible contrast between the vivid and convincing comparisons between temporal and spiritual realities which are offered to us in the Gospels, and the tantalizing obscurity of those that meet us in St Paul's Epistles. When the parables of Jesus defeat us, it is by their *depth*; they strike notes of perception that we are not attuned to as yet. When, in his analogies, St Paul eludes us, it is more often because of his *obliquity*; the temporal reality is so frequently offered to us in a guise that does violence to our experience of it.

Thus when Jesus likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a woman mixing leaven into her meal (Mt 13₃₃) we see the action and feel the ferment; and if we have any experience of the Kingdom, we acknowledge the aptness and force of the analogy. But when St Paul, urging a Church to expel an incestuous member (1 Co 5₇), says, 'Purge out the old leaven', he uses a figure which is literally incapable of visualization. Who has ever seen leaven, once impermeate in the meal, 'purged out'? Or again, Jesus said: 'Everyone therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock' (Mt 7₂₆). We read or hear His words; we see the temporal action and rejoice in it, and in proportion as we have practised the Christian obedience we respond to the aptness and force of the analogy. But it is very different with St Paul, when, writing about the Children of Israel in the wilderness, he says, 'They drank of a spiritual rock that followed them' (1 Co 10₄). This is such a 'rock' as no man ever set eyes upon—a rock, in fact, which it is impossible to see with the eyes of the imagination; so that we remember these words of St Paul, not for their aptness or force, but largely for their peculiarity.

There is evidence here of a failure of the visual imagination, and possibly even of some actual defect in the organ of bodily vision. It is as though, whatever he saw, he saw 'as in a mirror, darkly' (1 Co 13₁₂). The sense of sight seems to have been of secondary importance to him, and where most of us depend, for vividness, upon the eye, he depended upon the ear. For it is one of his most marked idiosyncrasies that when he describes some overwhelming spiritual experience, he uses auditory—not visual—images.

Contrast, for instance, his accounts (Ac 9₃₋₈, 22₆₋₁₁, 26₁₂₋₁₈) of his conversion on the Damascus road with St Peter's descriptions (Ac 10₉₋₁₆, 11₅₋₁₀) of his call to evangelize the Gentiles. Each man was overwhelmed by the invasion of a purely spiritual reality, and each of them, in describing what had happened, made use of terms expressive of ordinary sensible experience. In both cases there was a mingling of the visual and the auditory; but the proportions in which these were experienced, or described, are markedly different.

St Peter's story is predominantly a story of something *seen*—a

great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the heaven.

The verbal challenge and admonition, three times repeated with the vision, were altogether dependent for their force and intelligence upon the vision itself. It is obvious that we are dealing, in St Peter, with a man in whom the eye, rather than the ear, has the pre-eminence.

St Paul, on the other hand, appears unconscious of any visionary element in his experience; he tells us of nothing that he saw. There was a great light, brighter than the light of the sun—a literally blinding light; and all that followed was purely auditory. Blinded and prone, he heard a voice and answered it and was answered again; spoke again himself and again was spoken to. There was no need of any visionary content to this experience; the Voice carried the utmost conviction home to his mind and heart. Here we have a man in whom the ear, as an organ of experience, is more impressive, more important than the eye.

If we follow St Paul through the successive accounts of this experience as they are recorded in the Acts, we notice that there is progressive elaboration as they proceed; but the elaboration is always upon the auditory, never upon the visual side. The second and third accounts are as barren as the first of any visual content to this experience. It is true that he uses a word connected with vision when, in writing to the Church at Corinth (1 Co 15₈) about the Resurrection appearances of our Lord, he says: 'And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he *appeared* to me also.' But all his narratives make it plain that what had been manifested to the rest of the Apostles predominantly as a matter of visual experience, had in his case been demonstrated upon the auditory plane.

This idiosyncrasy of the Apostle's is illustrated again in his reference, when writing to Corinth, to an experience which had befallen him fourteen years previously.

I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Co 12₂₋₄).

Once again, there is a transcendent spiritual experience; once again, in order to narrate it intelligibly, he translates it into bodily terms; but once again, out of an available vocabulary covering the five bodily senses, he confines himself to the sense of sound. We may prefer an alternative description and say that his spiritual experience was communicated to him through the sense of sound. But in whichever of these two ways we understand it, the idiosyncrasy is plain: whatever is manifested to him must be manifested, or described as manifested, by means of sound.

It is not surprising to discover, therefore, that when he speaks, not of past but of anticipated experience, he describes that also in terms of sound. Even where others, sharing his anticipation, describe it in visual terms, he, faithful to his idiosyncrasy, speaks as though he expects it to be heard rather than seen. This can be vividly illustrated by comparing two of our Lord's references to the *Parousia* with two of St Paul's.

Let us quote the first of our Lord's references in full:

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming with the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven (Mk 13²⁴⁻²⁷; cf. Mt 24²⁹⁻³¹).

It is necessary to remember here that what is offered us in these verses is not a *description* of the *Parousia*; as a spiritual event of unparalleled magnitude and power, the *Parousia* defies description. What our Lord wishes to help us to anticipate is its essential quality and effect; and since description, in the nature of the case, is impossible, He offers us an analogy. The particular quality common to this picture and the *Parousia* is that of *universal impressiveness*; the Son of Man, in this unforgettable picture, makes His appearance precisely in such circumstances as guarantee that He must be seen by *all*. For there is first a universal darkness; sun, moon, stars, planets have all gone; there is no faintest glimmer, no farthest speck of light. But it was for light that the eye was made. Any eye, in encompassing darkness, will turn involuntarily to whatever light appears; any light, impinging upon universal darkness, will by its mere appearance compel the attention of every eye. And it is before the drop-scene of a universal black-out that the Son of Man, in this picture, is made to appear—that is, He is manifested precisely in such a way as will ensure that *every eye will see Him*. What the picture therefore says, as vividly as can be said in terms of bodily sight, is that the *Parousia*—whatever its precise nature—will effect a demonstration of the Son of Man's glory and power that is universal.

The second of our Lord's references to the *Parousia* is as follows:

For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of man (Mt 24²⁷; cf. Lk 17³⁴).

It is necessary for us to remember that what we are offered in this verse is not only no description; it is no mere *comparison*. For the *Parousia* is an unprecedented spiritual event and defies comparison. When our Saviour wishes to give us some notion of the essential quality and force of the *Parousia*, he offers this picture to us as an *analogy*. And here, precisely as in the other instance, the detail in which the analogical force resides is to be found in the quality of *universal impressiveness*. For what more distinguishes the lightning than its sheer impressiveness, its power of drawing attention to itself—the attention of all within its range? The lightning flickers, and those within its range say, "That was *lightning*!" So, says Jesus, shall be the coming of the Son of Man. That is to say, the *Parousia*, whatever its precise nature, will carry its conviction to every mind and heart, will effect a universal demonstration of the Son of Man's glory and power.

Both of Christ's analogies move in the realm of the eye. St Paul differs in no whit from his Master in his estimate of the essential force and value of the *Parousia*. He depends no less than his Lord upon analogy, in order to give expression to the substance of his anticipations. But the analogy that he uses rests not at all upon the eye, but entirely upon the ear:

We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord (1 Th 4₁₅₋₁₇).

We need to remind ourselves here, no less than in dealing with the Gospel passages, that what these verses offer us is no preview of the *Parousia*—not even an anticipatory sound-picture of that unique event. All that it is possible to anticipate of the *Parousia* is its essential *quality and force*, the effect that it will have.

What we derive from this analogy, as from those of our Saviour, is the assurance that the *Parousia* will effect a universal demonstration of His glory and power. But whereas the Gospel analogies are expressed in visual, this is expressed in auditory terms. Here we have 'a shout'; 'the voice of the archangel'; 'the trump of God'. This series of analogies-within-an-analogy proceeds progressively through an order that moves from the naturally-impressive, through the supernaturally-impressive, to the most impressive of all conceivable sounds. The essential quality of a 'shout' is its power to awaken attention; but how much more compelling must be 'the voice of the archangel', and how incalculably more compelling still, 'the trump of God'! From our Saviour's words we conclude that every eye will *see* the *Parousia*; from the Apostle's, that every ear will *hear* it. In other words, the force of this analogy is precisely the same as that of the others: the effect of the *Parousia* will be universal. But what Jesus expressed in terms of sight, St Paul expressed in terms of hearing.

This is precisely what meets us again in the second of the Pauline passages we need to consider:

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit in corruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and we shall be changed (1 Co 15₅₀₋₂).

Here, as previously with St Paul, we have an analogy based upon auditory experience. But how far it transcends it! This 'trumpet' carries its alarm into the ears of the dead. An event is portended here which is to bring its conviction of Christ's universal glory and power to *all*—not merely to all who happen to be alive in the world at that time, but to all who have ever lived and died here below. And this event is so resounding in its assurance of the Saviour's power, so incontrovertible in its demonstration of His divine glory, that its final effect can only be fittingly expressed in words taken from another of St Paul's Epistles:

every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Ph 2₁₁).

Let us observe, in bringing this brief study to a close, the marked difference in

quality between St Paul's few semi-visual analogies, instances of which we have found in 1 Co 5, and 1 Co 10, and his auditory ones, consideration of which has occupied the greater part of our attention. When St Paul adopts the former kind, the result is forced, ineffectual, unconvincing, unreal; and it is obvious that he possesses no genius in this particular aspect of imaginative activity. But when, in setting forth his deepest and most personal experiences in the spirit, or in bodying forth his most vibrant hopes, he uses imagery that is auditory, he is utterly satisfying and convincing. How effectual his auditory images are in the degree to which they admit us, almost as though we were participants, to the breathless thrust and riposte of his dialogue in the road, or to those words, never to be uttered upon earth, that fell upon his avid ears in Paradise! How inevitable it is, once we have read and pondered his epistles, that when we think of the *Parousia*, we should not only—following our Lord—lift up our eyes to the heavens, but—following the Apostle—cock our ears also in anticipation, at once fearful and exultant, of the trumpet's sound! This is the measure, not merely of his success, but of his sincerity, who was content, being shorn of part at least of the powers and pleasures of the sense of sight, to live and *listen*—to listen and to go on listening, in order, as often as he heard, with zeal and abandon to obey.

REGINALD GLANVILLE

THE SACRAMENTAL VISION OF REALITY

I

USING THE term 'sacramental' in its primary sense, a sacrament takes place wherever God's presence, truth, or love enters the human heart through our contact with reality. To the Sacramental view the universe is a tangible revelation of the mind of God; it is the embodied word of God addressed to us; it is God's self-picturing. The Sacramentalist, in this general sense, believes that intermingled with phenomena there is transcendent Reality, that the spiritual looks out through the facts and events of the material world.

Nature is thus a sacrament—a perceptible manifestation of the imperceptible God. And history, too, is a sacrament—an embodiment of the stability of righteousness. God expresses Himself in material and spiritual phenomena, and therefore in interpreting them we are interpreting Him.

*So since the universe began,
And till it shall be ended,
The soul of Nature, soul of man,
And soul of God are blended.*

The experience of sacredness is of the essence of religion, and to a thoroughly religious mind everything in the world will be ever-increasingly sacred because it will be found more and more to be sacramental. When we look upon the world rightly,

*something doth stir
Like organ-rhymes within us and doth awe
Our pulses into listening, and confer
Burdens of being on us; and we ache
With weights of revelations; and our ears
Hear voices from the Infinite that take
The hushed soul captive.*

II

Nature, being throughout a manifestation of spirit, should command our reverence. Being the means by which God objectifies His eternal thought in visible forms it is all holy ground, and has a worth given to it by its Creator beyond any that can be given to it by the manufacturers who shape its treasures.

Some thinkers have been anxious to keep God clear of contact with matter. To them the material universe is either evil or a delusion. Marcus Aurelius found 'decay in the substance of things—nothing but water, dust, bones, stench'. In the light of Christianity, the material world is neither evil nor delusive; it is a means by which we may understand the things that are behind and beyond it, a medium through which we learn the things of eternity. Therefore nature should not be depreciated or neglected as a revelation of God. We cannot afford to dispense with phenomena as a means of grace. It should not be forgotten that theology begins with nature. It is the very genius of the material world to express the spiritual to the spiritually minded. Those with sacramental vision see nature as St Paul saw it, waiting 'in earnest expectation'—that is, watching with head erect and stretched out. St Paul saw the material leaning forward towards the spiritual as its crown and vindication (Ro 8₁₉₋₂₂).

If we do not find Nature sacramental, we find it empty. Amidst its various expressions we either have the Word of God or only meaningless sounds.

For the modern and godless mind all sensuous reality is meaningless, worthless, and crudely material, so that faith in the possibility of entering through it into communion with the powers of grace appears to be an illusion, a primitive superstition, a kind of 'fetishism'. But a sensitive and religiously open mind, on the contrary, approaches reality with reverence and wonder, feeling the presence of God's power and greatness in everything and through all.¹

*The works of God are fair for nought,
Unless our eyes, in seeing,
See hidden in the thing the thought
That animates its being.*

III

The sacramental vision is by no means a new experience. To Abram the stars in the sky became the means of a sacrament. By the rod of an almond tree—the first tree to awake in the spring—the truth that God was fully awake to a grave situation reached Jeremiah. While rude tribes conceived the

rainbow as a living monster devouring men (all who died of sudden or violent death were devoured by the rainbow) there were those to whom the phenomenon was sacramental, telling a story of the Divine love for all the world. A poet sings that God spoke to Job out of a whirlwind—one of the many 'sacramental tempests' in the Old Testament. To a psalmist, a man of tender conscience appalled by evil, the heavens, the clouds, the great mountains and the great deep became gateways through which the grace of God entered his heart. 'Thy mercy, O Lord', he sang, 'is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep' (Ps 36, 6). To another psalmist, a shepherd, his occupation became sacramental, and God's grace entered the good man's heart as he reviewed the aspects of his daily work. How favoured we are to have had transmitted to us the song of his sacramental experiences in Psalm 23!

There are those who are nearer to us than these ancient seers, who have had the sacramental vision. Edmund Spenser had this insight. It is at the very heart of the famous 'Foure Hymnes' in Honour of Love, of Beautie, of Heavenly Love and of Heavenly Beautie. Spenser

*Felt through all this earthly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.*

In him, if in any man, the senses and the spirit were in fruitful wedlock. In two wonderful lines in his *Faerie Queene* he compressed the meaning of the Sacramental Vision:

*For the soule the bodie doth take;
For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.*

For Wordsworth, phantom walls 'vanished'; dividing material barriers disappeared. He became aware of the unity of Being through which Spirit freely runs.

*And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.*

To Wordsworth Nature was clothed with a religious significance. He called her 'the breath of God, of His pure word by miracle revealed'.

Linnaeus had the sacramental vision, when, having gazed on the unfolding of a blossom, he exclaimed, 'I saw the glory of God passing before my eyes, and bowed my head in worship.' To Frances Thompson 'Earthly beauty was but heavenly beauty taking to itself flesh'.

IV

Above all, thought travels to the sacramental experience of Jesus. He told mistaken people how He saw in sacramental vision 'the fowls of the air' and 'the lilies of the field'. He saw the Great Reality in all things, God even caring for little birds and clothing the lowly grass.

*Christ talked of grass and wind and rain,
And fig-trees and fair weather,
And made it His delight to bring
Heaven and earth together.*

By His parables He stated truths of the higher life in terms of the life of animals and plants, including the life of man. They reveal how clear His sacramental vision was. To Jesus the heavenly was ever breaking through the earthly.

The generation of Jesus looked for *signs*. That was good; but a sign is not necessarily a sacrament. The Jews looked for the astounding and sensational; something that broke the natural order rather than something that was to be seen within it. To Jesus the true signs were *in* the natural order, everywhere; and they were sacraments to Him because through them He saw and knew His Father, the great Reality. He was never out of a celestial order because the universe was His Father's house. To Him the craving for signs must have appeared ridiculous. There was no need to look beyond the usual course of life for disclosures of God's power, wisdom, and goodwill. No sign would be given. It was not signs the Jews really needed; it was sacraments, and they were not in the spiritual condition to have them. But how He strove to bring men into the spiritual experience that He Himself had!

Little wonder, then, that at the Last Supper He took bread and wine and blessed them and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body', and 'This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many'. His doing this has led to the sacramental vision being more restricted than Jesus can ever have intended. The institution of this sacrament should have acted the other way. It should have led to men finding sacraments in all life. The sacraments of the Church represent and focus a principle at work far beyond themselves. The institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper pointed forward to the time when all things would be Sacramental to men as they were no doubt to Jesus. How can it be doubted, when we know what life was to Him, that all life's expressions are intended to be found sacramental; and that we ought to hold communion with God through all life's features? He anticipated surely the time when the antithesis of the Divine and the material had gone; the time when God would not be sought only in the exceptional, in apparition and trance and mystery, but in the most lovely and regular and usual movements of life.

The Eagle-Seer, the writer of the Fourth Gospel, followed his Master closely by taking the sacramental view. To him, human flesh was a vehicle of the spiritual. Through the flesh of Jesus he saw the Godhead shine: 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth' (Jn 1₁₄). To many, the flesh was the source and seat of sin. Matter was essentially evil. Therefore the flesh was something to be disparaged, starved, despised, buffeted, enslaved;

it was far from being capable of being the habitation of the Divine. John saw, however, that God had made the material His shrine and medium. The flesh, tempted and tempting, liable to risks, and subject to contingencies, had been used to express fully the saving purpose of the Eternal. While other thinkers were repudiating the flesh and putting it to hard labour, John saw it as a vehicle of the Divine Word, and saw that it could only be so because it had inherently the quality of responsiveness to God's will; he saw that it was not essentially evil, but good.

*Save through the flesh Thou would'st not come to me,
The flesh, whereby Thy strength my weakness found.²*

John's sacramental vision has led many to believe with Novalis that 'there is but one temple and that the body of man, and that we touch heaven when we lay our hands on a human body'.

Throughout the glorious Fourth Gospel the sacramental interpretation is reflected and followed. The writer is concerned with the miracles of Jesus, not to publish them as historical facts, but as expressing spiritual facts. They were windows and doors to him through which he saw and experienced eternal reality. They represented aspects of the new life in Christ. In these days of much investigation and controversy concerning the historicity of the Gospel stories, it is well to remember that the historic can only have its *full* value for us as we see it sacramentally.

To St Paul also the material creation was a sacrament. 'God himself has made it plain', he said, 'for since the world was created, his invisible nature, his everlasting power and divine being, has been quite perceptible in what he has made' (Ro 1¹⁹, 20, Moffatt).

Early Church writers followed. To them the Incarnation was a sacrament, and the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, and the giving of the manna. Augustine, we are told, looked into Paradise and saw that every plant and flower and tree was a symbol of eternal beauty, a symbol partaking of that which it so beautifully symbolized. Phenomena were sacramental to him, full of the signals of indestructible glory.

v

To thinkers with only a materialistic outlook on life, the sacramental vision seems unpractical. To those who have the experience, however, it has some very practical aspects. Of one of these Wordsworth sings incomparably:

*Where living things, and things inanimate,
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear,
And speak to social reason's inner sense,
With inarticulate language.*

*For, the Man—
Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Both knows and loves such objects as excite
No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love*

*So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
 Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
 But seek for objects of a kindred love
 In fellow-natures, and a kindred joy.
 Accordingly he by degrees perceives
 His feelings of aversion softened down;
 A holy tenderness pervade his frame.
 His sanity of reason not impaired,
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
 From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round
 And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks;
 Until abhorrence and contempt are things
 He only knows by name; and, if he hear,
 From other mouths, the language which they speak,
 He is compassionate; and has no thought,
 No feeling, which can overcome his love.³*

Think, too, how the sacramental vision extends the area of the Christian life. Without it, it is easy to regard the Christian experience as a thing of the spirit only, and not something which is related to life's outward scenes; a thing of the soul and not of the body; Nature as something outside the Christian life and not something which is part of it. As the sacramental vision enlarges, its possessor becomes aware that the realm of the Christian life is unlimited and boundless. 'All things are yours.' As the vision grows there is the sound of falling walls. Divisive, hoary barriers, thick and high, erected by other conceptions, are levelled, making spiritual traffic possible which was not so before. An incalculable acreage is thus added to the Christian estate, in which are found new treasures hitherto undetected and unpossessed. One is no longer a victim of literalism or secularism, of prison-walls and dead dogmas and departmental conceptions of life. There are always poetry and music and novelty and new revelations for the one with this vision. Like the great Lord, he is *always in the Father's House of many mansions*.

As the 'natural' becomes part of the supernatural it becomes easy to see God in the normal, instead of seeing Him, as He is so often seen, only in the abnormal. One with sacramental insight does not need to be stimulated by miracle or catastrophe in order to be conscious of the Divine. Wonder and reverence are born of his contact with commonplace facts. Miracles to him are not rare; they are innumerable. He is ever in the midst of them. It is impossible for him to dismiss any phenomenon as ordinary. Every expression of Reality is full of heaven's meaning.

If men had the sacramental view of life, it would lift them to higher levels of social behaviour. 'The earth and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein' would be seen as belonging to God. If the physical were seen as expressive of the Divine, and consequently sacred, many forces now regarded as *Infradignitatern* would be lifted in the estimation of men and would be used for purposes which would accord with the will of their real Owner. Nature's forces and facts will be Christianized only when they are seen truly, that is sacramentally. This vision led Ruskin to seek to spiritualize

all human activities, and thus deliver men from the prison-house of materialism. The keynote of his proposals for social reform was that man is a spirit, neither mere body nor a machine. In his view the science of political economy was not a science of external wealth and should not be materialized. All life and all men in his sight were sacred. 'What fruit does thou bring back from this thy vision?' is the final question which Jacopone da Todi addresses to the mystic's soul. And the answer is: 'An ordered life in every state' (Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 23). For the achievement of the practical purposes of Christianity the habit must be formed of seeking in nature for the higher analogies and discovering in outward affairs the deeper spiritual laws which they express.

ARTHUR WOOD

¹ *God With Us*, by S. L. Frank, p. 233.

² *J. B. Tabb*.

³ *The Excursion*, Book IV.

MYTH, MYSTICISM, AND HISTORY

A PLOTINIAN STUDY, RELATED TO PRESENT-DAY THOUGHT AND ACTION

PART I

IT WOULD BE interesting to classify and judge people according to their attitude to myth. Are they scorers or worshippers? Do they regard myth as a lie or as higher truth? Does it, for them, obscure or illuminate? Is it for infants or for minds at their highest reach?

Plotinus treated the Platonic myths with great seriousness and reverence.¹ Though his attitude is critical, the criticism is not of Plato, but of Plato's misinterpreters, who obscure the main teaching of the myth by exaggerated attention to detail. He does not try to create new myths himself—Plato's are sufficient. But his abundant and inspired use of similes brings him into the realm where myths are made. For myth could be called simile on a grand scale; and good simile is myth in miniature. The purpose of both is the same.

That purpose is to show the unity of things, to show that the world is one, and that units do make unity. No mere adding machine, no mere enumeration of facts in nature or events in history, can give those facts or events significance. But as soon as we can say 'this is *like* that', though this and that belong to different kinds of being, we are on the prophetic path, or hill, or ladder, which leads to the vision of the world as One. Many stop short at earlier stages, especially at the supposed barrier marking off human life from the sub- and superhuman. A few, more logical, but chiefly more intuitive, see Unity on a vaster scale, from stones to stars. Among these, and high among them, stands Plotinus.

History, as chronicle of events, can never be as true as a myth which makes

its context the Universe, and illuminates it. Even Professor Toynbee's ten volumes do not give a context great enough for truth; and if the only adequate context is a Universe which is externally expanding, it would seem that the historian as such must be pessimistic, even if his innumerable facts seem to justify philosophic optimism. If the 'bad' facts preponderate, or cancel out the good, if, as Dean Inge reasons,² the answer to the sum of events is, in terms of value, zero, or a minus quantity, then there is double pessimism. We cannot know the whole, which alone can give truth; and in what we do know, evil cancels or outweighs good.

Professor Toynbee rejects the former, the historian's pessimism, claiming that the empirical amassing of facts does give significant truth. His own vast sum of addition might seem to give a zero answer in terms of value ('It all comes to the same thing in the end', says Browning—and modern cynicism adds: 'I couldn't care less'); but at least he finds a *pattern* in events—a three-and-a-half-beat rhythm, repeated through the ages, in cycles of war and peace. His critics accuse him of wishful thinking, of selecting the facts to fit the pattern. We might in turn challenge the critics: Do you then, deny all pattern in history? If not, what pattern do you find? And does it not rest on your own wishful thinking?

Plotinus did not, and could not, bestow on history the importance accorded to it by Professor Toynbee, nor spend the twenty years of research into twenty-one civilizations. The last of them was not born, and most of the others were buried too deep for third-century excavation, whether by brain or mattock. Yet there are striking resemblances in the attitudes of mind of these two world explorers towards world happenings—they share a fatalistic belief in time-cycles, and both belong to a dark century. Thinkers today can hardly be more bitter or disillusioned than were the Gnostics whom Plotinus was at such pains to refute.³ But with him, fatalism means optimism. That optimism comes partly from the Unity principle on which his whole philosophy rests, and partly from that mystic Intuition which, carrying an authority above rational argument, compelled him to identify the One with the Good.

Professor Toynbee also has recourse to this supra-rational faculty, which he calls inspiration, and he is blamed by his critics for this, as being a mystic method inconsistent with his mainly empirical argument. Inconsistency was a frequent charge in the criticism of Plotinus' own students in his classroom. Often he would only meet it by paradox: the two hypotheses in question are contradictory, but both are true.

If all is fated, and if all is pattern, can we prophecy the future from the past? Professor Toynbee thinks that we can, but mainly on empirical grounds, and by appeal to reason. The evidence of the twenty-one civilizations, so regularly repeating the five stages, constitutes for him an overwhelming probability that future ages will repeat them. But, say the critics, is he not 'confusing logic with speculation'? Does he not 'pretend to have proved what he has merely stated'? Is not this 'a terrible perversion of history'? Others might go further and reject the empirical method itself as a ground for historical prophecy, whether of good or ill. Today they are in a strong position. We do see new, unprecedented things under this sun, and we learn of more and more suns; surely 'anything might happen'. Reasoned fatalism is less in vogue than chance.

Plotinus, by his Unity principle, escapes the criticism of wishful thinking in selecting facts. All particular events are unimportant as compared with the whole, or except in their relation to the whole; therefore their selection by the historian matters little. Golden Age and Dark Age are both good as belonging to the one good plan. This seems to rule out empiricism as a ground for a philosophy of history. Is history anything more than a gigantic diary, sweeping up the days into light-years? Already the chronicle is far beyond the grasp of human intelligence. Every year, and every fresh research, can only make it more so, and only give greater excuse for that ultra-specialization which is responsible for so much of our evil plight. This ultra-specialization Professor Toynbee splendidly defies with his 'grand obsession'.⁴ For, like Plotinus, he is obsessed with the principle of Unity. There must be one plan, or at least a pattern, making order out of all that happens, even if the events are innumerable and defy human calculation. His three-and-a-half-beat pattern may seem as arbitrary, or even superstitious, as the Pythagorean numbers, or the half-mystic $54(9 \times 6)$ into which Porphyry forced the confused writings of Plotinus to form the *Enneads*. Even so, history written in the faith that there is pattern is of more use and more interest to us than mere chronicle, long or short; and still more so, if, behind the pattern, there can be found purpose.

Pattern and purpose are found, not by intellectual calculation, for events outstrip our grasp, but by that higher faculty which puts us into direct contact with Unity, shows us all things as One, and identifies the One with the Good. Again we ask, is this wishful thinking?

The relation of history to myth, and the relative truth of both, is the subject of Charles Roden Buxton's inspiring study, *Prophets of Heaven and Hell*. History, he says, must include, if it is to be true, far more than 'the external record of public events'. It must include the record of thought, and of thinkers and their personality. For these not only throw light on public events, but are themselves history—events of highest importance. It must include 'all that has happened to man in the past', and cannot be separated from literature, sociology, and culture. It will show that efforts of thought and of political action reaching out to a World-State, though still unfulfilled, are deep-rooted in the past, and of far greater significance than 'the mushroom growth of nationalism'. And if the history, bursting its barriers, is exchanged for myth, no racial or nationalist myth is true unless it too transcends itself, as do the four great epics here considered.⁵

But they go much further, beyond the 'one world' of human history, into the one universe, transcending time and space. It is in this vaster context that Virgil and Dante meet. Into this, Milton and Goethe expanded their earlier chosen themes—'Each of the four poems is a picture of the Universe as a whole'.

And 'Heaven is reunion with the whole', wrote Charles Roden Buxton.⁶ Deliberately humanist though he was, and though his life of 'unremitting struggle' was dedicated to practical service in political and social fields, yet the background of his thought was the universal context of all this. The four great 'Prophets of Heaven and Hell' were his life-companions, as well as the subject of his unfinished book; and their four great myths were chosen because, though their *story* was human adventure, their *theme* was the universe. Virgil,

Dante, Milton and Goethe—'only these four, in two thousand years', were found great enough to tackle it.

Does the sheer greatness of the theme prove the goodness of the world? Would every myth, if its horizon were wide enough, 'justify the ways of God to Men'—and not to men only, but to non-human existences, in time and eternity? These four Poet-Prophets cannot be accused of facile optimism. They were resolved to go all lengths, and beyond human lengths, in testing the evidence of good and evil before making the great affirmation of faith, or intuition. It was amid the almost unreadable horrors of the *Inferno* that Dante found 'Divine Justice' (though no commentator can make us agree with his merciless judgement). Virgil, his guide, had made the awful journey before him, and, though he is so much more gentle, it is by his first-hand experience of a 'tearful' universe that he still appeals so strongly to sensitive readers. Virgil's last words—the words of 'Rome's greatest and only tragedian'⁷—are of hope, and a world at peace. It was on the *lost Paradise* that Milton concentrated his best effort. As for Goethe, Faust's redemption was the work of most cruel vicarious suffering, added to his own, willed and unwilled. Even at such a price, the redeemed world is pronounced good; and in that world Goethe bids us play our part courageously—'*im Guten, Ganzen, Schonen resolut zu leben*'—because the whole is beautiful and good, and nothing less than the whole is wholly true.

(To be Concluded)

M. L. V. HUGHES

¹ So does J. F. Stewart, *Myths of Plato*.

² *The Philosophy of Plotinus*.

³ *Ennead*, II.ix.

⁴ Toynbee, *A Study of History* (review by Noel Annan).

⁵ Charles Roden Buxton, *Prophets of Heaven and Hell* (C.U.P., 1945). The myths are Virgil's *Aeneid*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Goethe's *Faust*.

⁶ *Ibid.* Introduction by D. Roden Buxton.

⁷ Haecker—Virgil, Father of the West.

Recent Literature

EDITED BY C. RYDER SMITH

The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages, by Walter Ullmann. (Methuen, 42s.)

To Methuen's excellent list of medieval studies Dr Ullmann has added a most meticulously learned work on the papacy. He seems to be acquainted at first hand with every document or study or article that bears on the subject (except possibly A. J. Carlyle's *Medieval Political Theory*), and his must be a standard reference book for some time to come. His subject is fascinating. The relations of Church and State in the Middle Ages were determined by the legacy of the old Roman Empire. The residuary legatee in the fifth century was the Pope, for he alone had authority which was unaffected by the hazards of war and invasion. And so when the empire was reconstituted by Charlemagne there had been nearly four centuries of development of papal power and the doctrine of 'the two swords' represented in theory something which had already grown into a reality. There was still, however, the complicating factor of the existence of the Eastern Empire, and the difference in the relations of Church and State in Constantinople from what they were in the West inevitably raised the issue of the extent of papal jurisdiction. When, however, by the end of the eighth century the terms 'Romanus' and 'Christianus' became interchangeable the day was past for the Eastern Church to hope for any parity of esteem with Rome. And, since in the case of every institution a merely pragmatic basis is not enough, the papal power was later given a savour of antiquity in the age of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. All these complicated factors, their causes and consequences, are handled with great thoroughness by Dr Ullmann. In this, as in his earlier books, he writes more as a lawyer than as a historian, and so he seems to be concerned chiefly with movements that led to greater codification and consolidation of the papal power, and much less, if at all, with the papacy as a court of equity (or, as Dr Ullmann prefers elsewhere to call it, *epieikeia*). In the pontificate, for instance, of Innocent IV the papacy acted in everything except in matters touching its own prestige as a softening influence on the rigidities of the civil law. This, however, was a much later development, and the later popes of the Middle Ages were able to exercise this power only because their position had gradually been built up by their predecessors to a point where a generous common sense could not be interpreted as weakness. This, however, carries us beyond the period dealt with in this book, which is mainly a study of origins. It is interesting to notice that the typical Wycliffite doctrine that 'dominion is founded in grace' appears as early as Pope Nicholas I in the ninth century, only there it is applied by the pope to the *regnum* and not to the *sacerdotium* (p. 207).

A. VICTOR MURRAY

The Life and Teachings of Jesus, by Charles M. Laymon. (Abingdon Press, via Epworth Bookshop. \$3.00.)

This book has many admirable qualities. It is well-informed, non-partisan, and well-arranged. Each chapter is followed by a questionnaire, with suggestions for discussion, as well as a list of books for further study. Evidently its author is well-acquainted with many of the trends in modern gospel-study, though he ignores completely some of the leading contentions of the books he recommends (e.g. T. W. Manson's *Teaching of Jesus* and his discussion of the meaning of the title 'the Son of Man'). On the whole, in spite of its merits, the book is a striking example of the difficulty—perhaps we should say the impossibility—of writing a completely 'objective' account of the life of our Lord. The life seems to have gone out of the story.

The impression left on the mind of one reader, at least, is that the author has worked his way laboriously through an aggregation of historical facts and collected them. It has been said that Jesus breaks out of every frame historians and idealist philosophers have made for Him. He certainly escapes from this one. We are left with a man of the highest character, doing his best under extreme difficulties, and finally becoming a martyr to his ideals; there is no apparent reason for our Lord's transformation of world-history. This is *Hamlet* without the prince of Denmark indeed.

J. A. FINDLAY

Juliana of Norwich: An Appreciation and an Anthology, by P. Franklin Chambers. (Gollancz, 15s.)

It has often been stated that an increased interest in mysticism has taken place during the past twenty years. Be that as it may, it is certain that Dame Julian and her *Revelations of Divine Love* are enjoying an appreciation second to none among English mystics. Poet, composer and novelist are amongst those who today draw inspiration from her. The highlight of this interest must surely be the consecration on 8th May 1953 of a reconstructed chapel and shrine in Norwich in thanksgiving for the life and work of the famous anchoress. On the eve of the ceremony, Mr Chambers, a Free Church minister, delivered the Commemoration Address before a distinguished and widely represented Christian gathering and, slightly amplified, it now happily comprises one-third of the present volume. Perhaps after all the research which has gone into the study of Julian there is little new that can be said, either of her or her book, but Mr Chambers has not only gathered together all available information, but has provided the reader with the fruit of his own close studies. While this book is an admirable introduction to those whose knowledge of the subject is little more than superficial, for those who are acquainted with the *Revelations* there is a wealth of detail which cannot fail to hold the attention. It is interesting to recall that Margery Kempe was the anchoress's contemporary and had a number of conversations with her. 'Much was the holy dalliance that the anchoress and this creature had' (*The Book of Margery Kempe*), but, alas, the contact is too briefly reported to satisfy our natural curiosity about Julian. Mr Chambers's anthology is divided into three sections, Experiential, Evangelical, and Mystical, and he gives the reader a generous number of extracts from the *Revelations* which should satisfy the most critical. Two Appendices comprising quotations from the eight published editions (only two of which are available today), and a Note on the manuscript versions completes this erudite and sympathetic study.

JOHN EARLE

The Methodist Story, by Cyril J. Davey. (Epworth Press, 10s. 6d.)

Understanding the Methodist Church, by Nolan B. Harmon. (Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, via Epworth Bookshop, \$2.00.)

Although 'thousands of books, pamphlets, and articles have been written about Methodism', Cyril J. Davey, makes bold to say: 'No volume has yet been written . . . which tells simply how the various Methodist denominations began, what happened to them in their days of separation, how they came to be reunited, and what has happened since the Union of 1932.' In his endeavour to write such a volume in modest compass, he discards all footnotes and references, a defect that is difficult to compensate, and he has to give a restricted account of important subjects. One thing he has done with success, and praise is due to him for it. He has placed in their proper setting the activities of the minor sections of Methodism. His book is divided into four parts: 'The Making of a Church, 1784-95', 'The Age of Revolt, 1796-1850', 'The Years of Separation, 1800-1932', 'Reunited, 1932-50'. The work seems to have been written especially for the initiated, and not for the critic or the

unconverted, and to this restricted circle of readers it should prove a reliable introduction to a very important subject. The style and treatment are pleasant and pleasing, and the facts are correct and revealing. This handbook to Methodist history will suit those who like a true and entrancing story.

Nolan B. Harmon, a distinguished American scholar, believes that a closer 'come-together' of British and American Methodists should be preceded by a clearer understanding of one another. Hence the title of his latest book, *Understanding the Methodist Church* (i.e. the Methodist Church of the United States of America). Its contents are described under the headlines of 'History', 'Doctrines and Beliefs', 'Rules for Christian Conduct', 'Organization and Ministry', 'Worship and Sacraments', 'Work in the World', 'Relation to Other Churches'. Within the limits of 191 pages, adequate consideration of these subjects is impossible. For British readers the author might have served a better purpose had he given more history and less of doctrine and discipline. Yet, while this book is primarily intended for American consumption, its style and method of treatment being essentially American, it should be welcome in Britain. It will give momentum to the process of getting to know one another. It is what it sets out to be, 'inspirational as well as informative'.

ROBERT F. WEARMOUTH

An Order for Holy Baptism. (O.U.P., 1s.)

This service, authorized at the end of 1954 by the Church of South India for optional and experimental use, has alternative sections which are to be used according as the persons to be baptized are infants or adults. In the case of infants, the parents must be instructed beforehand about the meaning of baptism, only those who are themselves baptized and in good standing may bring their children for baptism (with a possible exception, at the discretion of the minister, in the case of a husband and wife who have been disciplined, but still come regularly to church and show a sincere desire to bring up their children in the Christian way), the parents are required to promise to bring up the child in the way of Christ (by responding to three questions phrased as in the present Methodist service, except that the third one is expanded to make it more definite), and the congregation also undertake their share of responsibility (again in the words of the Methodist service). If the parents cannot pledge themselves to give the promises contained in the service, the minister may defer the baptism of the child. Provision is made for godparents (for infants) or witnesses (for adults), but only those who have the status of communicants are qualified so to act. The godparents (if any) make the promises with the parents. Unless special circumstances make it impossible, baptism must be administered at a public service. Its purpose is that the persons baptized 'may be sealed as members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven'. Adults are to be 'assured' by it of the forgiveness of their sins and their adoption as God's children in the Holy Spirit. Infants belong with their parents to God, and in baptism 'he establishes them in the family and household of faith that they may grow up as members of Christ and heirs of the kingdom of heaven'. Prayers are offered either 'that these persons, being baptized in this water, may be born anew in the fellowship of thy Church', or that the water may be blessed 'that it may signify the washing away of sin, and that those baptized therein may be born again to eternal life'. Adults who have been baptized are told that by baptism they have put off their old nature and put on Christ, that they are accepted as children of God, that baptism unites them with Christ in the likeness of His death and Resurrection, and that they must reckon themselves dead to sin and bear witness to the world that Christ is their life. In addition to the optional use of the signing of the cross, there are two other optional ceremonies: the putting on of a white garment, and the taking of a lighted lamp or taper. 'It should be noted,

however, that they in no wise add to the efficacy of baptism, but are intended only to represent the meaning of the sacrament.'

J. ALAN KAY

La Rancontre d'autri, by Roger Mehl. (Delachaux and Niestlé, 4 fr. Swiss.)

In this logical treatise Professor Mehl discusses the nature and conditions of human intercourse, with a number of references to Continental theologians and philosophers. After a short Introduction he divides his thesis into five chapters, the first three of which deal with communication in general, and the last two with the communication of the Christian message. In the first part of the book he demonstrates the impossibility of full communication by natural means. Even in conjugal love there are unplumbed depths in the nature of each of the partners, and the communication is apt to be interrupted by jealousy. 'Conjugal love must be exclusive if it is to remain true.' In the second part of the book, some timely remarks on the dangers of the techniques used in revivals recall Wesley's cautions in his sermon on 'The Nature of Enthusiasm'. On the other hand, Professor Mehl deprecates any attempt to communicate the gospel by a purely rationalistic method, for 'rationalism imagines an almost spatial opposition between this lower world of men and their experiences and a superior world of intemporal ideas and truths. The notion of value disproves this theory (*fait craquer ce schéma*); for a value is only authentic when it appears at the heart of an historic situation.' Professor Mehl's conclusion is that full communication is made possible by a living faith in Christ, who by his Incarnation and his redeeming work has identified himself with every human being. The book is written from the Calvinistic standpoint; and the author's sense of the transcendence of God sometimes causes him to fall into the fallacy of false opposition, for instance, in his statement on p. 51 that 'the witnesses to the presence of God in human history are not those who have had an experience of that presence, but those who have been chosen by God Himself to help in His work'.

H. HOGARTH

The Expansion of Awareness, by Arthur W. Osborn. (Omega Press, Reigate, 15s.)

This is another of the many books upon the supernatural which have appeared of late. It is written by a layman, who, as Dr Raynor Johnson tells us in the Introduction, is a business-man. There is, however, no suggestion of the amateur in these pages, and the appended book list indicates a very wide acquaintance with what has been written on this subject, though one is surprised that the work of Professor Rhine and of Dr Soal are but barely mentioned. Like most books on the subject, it increases our inclination to believe but leaves us still asking what to believe. Against all the cases cited, there is in one's mind the other side, the more numerous cases where such things apparently should have happened and did not. For example, Mr Osborn quotes the case of a Mr Chaffin, whose will was discovered after his death through his son's having vivid dreams in which his father appeared and indicated where the will was hidden. Even so that does not prove that the dream was instigated by the father, and against it one must set the case of that ardent seeker after the truth in these matters, William James. He left a sealed message with his bankers and promised that if he were able he would do all he could to transmit its contents to any medium who could get in touch with him after death. But nothing happened. What one appreciates about Mr Osborn's book is his fairness and lack of dogmatism. He believes whole-heartedly that the dominant factor and significance of existence is spiritual and that the path to it is mystical rather than rational. The standpoint is religious rather than Christian, but the spirit is admirable. This book will be well worth consulting by those who are engaged in psychical research and it provides an introduction to the work of many others who have written about the same subject.

E. S. WATERHOUSE

A Doctor's Faith Holds Fast, by Christopher Woodard. (Parrish, 12s. 6d.)

This book is really a sequel to *A Doctor Heals By Faith* and has arisen out of the very large correspondence and the many contacts occasioned by that book. The present title is significant, for this is pre-eminently the book of a Christian disciple—of a man who, while trained in, and thankful for, the disciplines of modern medical science, does not limit the resources open to the sick mind-body to such disciplines. Here is the authentic presence of a new dimension and, amid all that may perplex, the author's 'faith' holds fast. But he does not pretend to be pursuing an 'easy' pathway or to offer 'short-cuts' to wholeness. In a realm where, unfortunately, facile dogmatism is as common as it is misleading, he maintains a healthy, receptive mind and a deep humility. The humility and spiritual discipline of this book are part of its sanity and its benedictions. For the author each occasion of healing is a *new* occasion, as Jesus tried to lead His disciples to see when they could not cure the 'epileptic' boy. In a word, there is no such thing as achieving healing on formulas or reputation. 'Before I . . . do anything I always ask Christ to use me again.' Those simple words are a key to the practice in this book. With that note dominant many perplexing aspects of this practice are faced courageously. For instance, in a section dealing with 'possession' and 'exorcism' there is a story, strange and tragic, that elicits the comment: 'That story is a warning.' The same attitude is revealed under 'Evidence', in the answers to some constant 'Questions', and in a welcome chapter on 'The Doctors and the Church'. While a statement here and there may not command ready acceptance, the outstanding value of this book—not least for those interested in the 'ministry of healing'—will be found in the many wise comments that light up its pages and that stem from an unusual experience and a full committal to the Lord Christ.

JOHN MARTIN

I Went to Moscow, by Mervyn Stockwood. (Epworth Press, 15s.)

Canon Mervyn Stockwood, an active and wide-awake Anglican clergyman, well-known for the thrust of his parochial work in East Bristol, looking for a new venue for a continental holiday, contrived to get himself appointed by the *Daily Herald* as a special correspondent to Russia, to see for himself and to report what he saw. None could be better fitted than he for such a venture. He knew a good deal about Marxian philosophy, had had much debate with Communists in Britain, possessed much interest in things Russian, and had a particular regard for the Russian Orthodox Church. There was only one thing lacking: apparently he did not know the language, and was therefore dependent upon that intriguing person, the Intourist interpreter! He has given a vivacious story of his doings and his impressions. True, it follows the pattern of many others, beginning with the difficulties to be faced in getting a *visa*. When the Canon gets to Moscow there is the inevitable search of his baggage to see what books and papers he carries with him, with the amusing consequence that the Customs officials pounce upon some sermon notes, and, greatly puzzled, take them off to read. So did the gospel, he chuckles, challenge atheism at the outset! For the rest, there are vivid accounts of hotel life, of the theatre, of visits to child-care activities and schools and the new Moscow University, of interviews with trade union officials, of a visit to the Cathedral and an intimate talk with Patriarch Alexis, and much more. There were limits, of course, to what the traveller could see and do. He was given no opportunity of seeing inside a Russian factory or of visiting a collective farm. Apart from his Intourist interpreter, he could never talk with a Russian alone, only with groups, and he was never allowed into the privacy of a Russian home. Nor did he go further afield outside Moscow than the Zagorsk Monastery. The reader, however, will be diverted by the robustness of Canon Stockwood's conversations with the Russians

he met, illuminated by his comments on life under the Soviet *régime*, and, not least, amused by the weariness to which he confesses at seeing the portraits of Stalin and Lenin wherever he went and the unending pictures of collective farms in every cinema show.

E. C. URWIN

Religion in Prison, by J. Arthur Hoyles. (Epworth Press, 10s. 6d.)

This book is an attempt to expound the influence of the Christian faith in prison, both in its administration and reform and on prisoners themselves. It is readable and interesting, but it would have been more effective had it been more limited in its field of review and more restricted in its claims. Christian men and women have exerted a profound influence on prisons and prisoners, and have greatly affected public opinion. The influence of others has also been notable, and must not be too lightly dismissed. It may well be claimed that Christian people have been ready to seize any opportunities of service and have turned those opportunities to great advantage. While the cellular system, for example, was adopted not primarily from religious motives, but as a means of correction more efficient than the indiscriminate herding together of different types, one result of the system was to enable 'the chaplain to minister to his flock in a more personal and intimate way'. The last four chapters, dealing with methods of rehabilitation, punishment, psychology, and the death penalty, give the opinions of one Christian on these controversial matters, and, as such, are of value so long as too extravagant claims are not made. The book would have been more valuable had it been more representative of present-day conditions in English prisons, and not largely a culling of material from other books ranging over much ground. The influence of religion is wider in scope than the book sometimes suggests, and its effect upon prisoners is seen not only in exceptional stories of conversion (of which five cases from four continents are instanced), but in the quiet ministry of many an unpublicized chaplain who, by his life and understanding, mediates the grace of God to needy souls.

G. FRAZER THOMPSON

God in His World, by Charles S. Duthie. (Independent Press, 8s. 6d.)

Since the greater London Commando Campaign the Methodist Church has let the initiative in large-scale evangelism pass to others. The Evangelical Alliance imports Dr Graham. The Church of Scotland has its 'Tell Scotland' movement. Principal Duthie's book, inspired by this last movement, was commissioned by the Congregational Union as its Lenten book for 1955. It speaks to and for an evangelism which stems, not from sporadic efforts delegated to individual preachers, but from the continuous outward pressure of a total church community awake to the needs of the world about it. It is an evangelism native to the ethos of Methodism, with its emphasis on fellowship and personal witness. Dr Duthie tells us that he writes for 'the Christian layman who is seeking to give expression to his faith in an outreaching concern for others', and that he writes because 'true Christian evangelism is rooted in the understanding of God'. He half-apologizes for his second and third chapters being more technically theological than the rest. His second chapter, 'The Matchless Christ', seems his weakest, not because it is theological or technical, but because it descends to details of criticism of contemporary theology. It is not technical theology the laity shuns, but debated theology. But after that he gets well into a fine stride, and is his greatest in his sixth chapter, on 'Engagement with the World'. His ten chapters blend theology, practical wisdom, and a shrewd insight into our contemporary scene, and give us a book capable of being made the basis of study by thoughtful groups in Churches of any denomination whose concern is Evangelism by all the Church, for all the time, and in all of life.

R. KISSACK

Over His Own Signature, by Leslie D. Weatherhead. (Epworth Press, 10s. 6d.)

It is not often that a title and the book to which it refers show equal signs of inspiration. In Dr Weatherhead's devotional studies of our Lord's verbal pictures of Himself this is the case. We are asked to look at a series of portraits. They are to be found in sentences, spoken by Jesus, each beginning with the words 'I am'. We find ourselves reading an autobiography. These are signed portraits, and that is why Dr Weatherhead calls his book *Over His Own Signature*. But this is no casual visit to a portrait gallery. 'We can never see Him without being challenged to extend our service to the world and correct our sense of values, and without being empowered to alter our lives.' In defending his acceptance of the reliability of the recorded spoken words, the author maintains that 'an eastern Jewish memory was a far more reliable instrument than a western modern one'. (Incidentally, the argument is strengthened when one realizes how much less there was to be remembered!) So, accepting the record, Dr Weatherhead helps us to see the pictures more clearly than before. The substance of the book was delivered in the 'Perkins Lectures', at Wichita Falls, Texas. The chapters are described by their author as 'simple talks', but here simplicity is the essence of true art. This very thoughtful book shows an understanding of our questions and interprets God's answers. In the expositions there are flashes of genius, but always one is conscious of the steady light of Truth, serene and irrefutable. The Gospel pictures are not to be seen at a glance. That Bread of Life—that flesh on which we must feed to live—is no divine surrealism. It means something that you and I can, and should, be able to understand. 'The general purpose of this message of Jesus seems to me to be that God is as necessary to the fullest and truest—that is the spiritual—life of man as bread is necessary to the life of his body. . . . Life depends on God-given bread. . . . Life in any but its most elementary forms depends on more than bread.' So, remembering our physical, mental and spiritual needs, we consider the meaning of the passage in John 6^{25, 48} and the petition in the Office of Holy Communion, 'Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat His flesh and to drink His blood'. 'What is meant', says Dr Weatherhead, 'is that fulness of living demands that the very nature of God must somehow be absorbed by our own nature.' We feed our souls on God through the friendship which Christ offers. Before we look at another portrait, that of the Light of the World, we are asked to look at the home-life of the early Christians. Poorly housed, without much fire or light, with no books, no music—and a spiritual darkness around them more gloomy than the physical—it was small wonder that they dreaded the passing of the daylight. To such people the evangelist brought great good news. 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' The sky was swept clean of filthy shapes. The night was robbed of obscene horrors. Nature, though still terrifying, was but an expression of the mind of God and meant no evil. The heart of the universe was friendly and the whole world was 'full of His glory'. So Dr Weatherhead introduces us to the portrait of the Light of the World. First we must look *at* the Light. 'It must have been wonderful just to see His face with the light of heaven shining through His eyes and flashing in His words and deeds.' Then the light reveals. In a parable of singular beauty we are shown a jeweller's shop where a blaze of light reveals the splendour of jewels, which seems to say as they gleam, 'Though we have no light within ourselves we reflect the light that is above us'. So Christians 'fling back into this dark world a radiance they get from Him'. But the light shows up the dust in the corners, and distinguishes the diamonds from the paste! The pagan feast, a glittering orgy, seems sordid and vulgar when 'there rises the slow, majestic, steady, certain light of dawn, until the guttering candles seem an insult to its glory. Yes, when the Dawn comes, all other lights fail and all false ways of living are betrayed.' There are eleven pictures in this gallery, and we have a wise

and gracious guide to show them to us. Come to think of it, this book itself is autobiographical, for its exposition is based not merely on academic learning, but on personal experience. Perhaps indeed it reveals more of the man who wrote it than he himself realized. It shows us our friend, but we see him looking at his Lord. That is why it seems to us so authentic.

LESLIE F. CHURCH

The Primacy of Preaching Today, by Arthur A. Cowan. (T. and T. Clark, 7s. 6d.)

Conquering the Seven Deadly Sins, by Lance Webb. (Abingdon Press, via Epworth Bookshop, \$3.00.)

The Hand of Glory, by G. T. Bellhouse. (Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.)

There is an impression abroad that modern biblical scholarship has somehow blunted the edge and weakened the authority of preaching, and that only the fundamentalist, the obscurantist, can now preach with certainty and incisiveness. Dr Cowan rebuts that idea. Not that his tone is polemical. Far from it. He writes very positively and constructively, and not the least valuable features of his book are the many suggestions for texts and subjects, and how to deal with them without burking any of the problems that criticism may raise. 'Preaching', he says, is 'a person speaking to persons', and nothing can take the place of the minister speaking out of his own pastoral experience to the congregation whom he serves. But the young preacher is advised 'to make most of his sermons expositions of Scripture', since the Bible contains 'the Word of God which delivers us from the tyrannizing impressions of the moment'. But how is this Word of God to be expounded effectively in the modern world? Here the issues are fairly faced. Using, unobtrusively, the tools of scholarship, Dr Cowan demonstrates the homiletical treatment of the Old and New Testaments, and the use of the Christian Year for systematic doctrinal preaching firmly based on the Bible. 'The preacher's vocation is not to air his uncertainties, but to declare the great certainties', yet 'such exposition . . . can be very dull if it is only a statement of dead certainties', and therefore ample guidance is given on how to drive home the 'great certainties' with 'the surprise-power essential to all effective preaching'. These lectures are full of good things—the arresting phrase, the clinching epigram, and much heartening evidence of all that the last hundred years or so of biblical research can contribute to enrich and enforce the message of the modern pulpit.

Dr Webb exemplifies many of the virtues that Dr Cowan extols. He writes as a result of his own pastoral work, and brings to the task a remarkably well-stored mind, which ranges with profit over a wide field of ancient and modern literature. He is surely right in his contention that, if men today lack a sense of sin, it is often because the ugly reality has been conveniently camouflaged by delusive terminology, a terminology to which the quotations from medieval writers present a stark contrast. The classic list of sins (to which an eighth, 'Anxiety or Worry', has been added) is shown to be still the most adequate diagnosis of man's condition. But behind all these separate sins lies sin itself, that rebellion against God for which the only final antidote is the gospel. Dr Webb is prepared to welcome, and to utilize with knowledge, such fresh insights as the psychologist and sociologist can bring to bear; but what gives unity and stamina to his whole treatment of the subject is its firm 'theological backbone', his steadfast hold upon God's Good News.

One of the commonest criticisms of sermons is that they are 'remote from every day living'. That cannot be said of the sermons collected in *The Hand of Glory*. Here there is no professional jargon; Christian themes are handled with attractive simplicity; and Mr Bellhouse is obviously getting to grips with the individual problems and failures that trouble the man in the pew.

G. ERNEST LONG

The Preacher's Handbook, No. 4, edited by Greville P. Lewis. (Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.)

Live and Learn, by A. Graham Ikin. (Epworth Press, 6s.)

The Practice of Prayer, by Albert D. Belden. (Rockcliff, 6s.)

With its fourth number *The Preacher's Handbook* has earned the right to be classed as a hardy biennial. The only complaint might come from those (and they must be many) who desire a yearly issue. Why not? In Biblical study, as in other things, the busy man, be he circuit minister or businessman-cum-lay-preacher, can hardly keep pace with the accelerating *tempo* of today. Here, at any rate, is something to help him with sermonizing and the conduct of worship—terse commentaries on two of the most difficult sections of the Bible—but no cut-and-dried sermons for mechanical reproduction—in short, a handy help for a thinker. Mr Lewis has been well served by his contributors. Minor errors occur. Would Goldsmith's parson have felt passing rich on *thirty* pounds a year? And the index might be improved. None the less, this book will be an inspiration and a prompter to any preacher. Incidentally and indirectly it may lead to a new respect for some of Charles Wesley's lesser-known hymns.

The two other books are also timely when Spiritual Healing is so much discussed and ideas thereon need clarifying. *Live and Learn* is composed of a number of papers contributed to various magazines, religious, philosophical and maternal. Some are almost purely psychological. The preface says that the idea is 'to add another stone to the bridge between science and religion'. If so, an opportunity has been lost in the first few articles where religious sanctions would have immensely strengthened the argument. 'If we count our blessings, we can win through the slough of despond and find ourselves masters of circumstances.' But Christian got out of the slough by using the steps! Taken as a whole, however, we get sound common sense, simplified psychology, and the expression of a true faith. Miss Ikin speaks of 'creative imagination'; Dr Belden of 'creative co-operation with God'. This is stressed in *The Practice of Prayer*, so that, in spite of the spate of books and articles on prayer, the author really has something new to contribute. There is no evasion of difficulties *via* pious platitudes or theological jargon, but a reasoned statement, sane, sound and practical, with due regard to values, both psychological and religious.

HAROLD MALLINSON

Black River, by Bernard Watson. (Salvationist Publishing House, 4s. 6d.)

Illustrated Bible Talks for Young People, by Ernest N. Denham. (Salvationist Publishing House, 3s.)

In writing *Black River*, Brigadier Watson has attempted an extraordinarily difficult task—to write an interesting and exciting story, for boys of twelve to fifteen years old, whose main subject is openly and unashamedly religious—and he has unquestionably succeeded. It is the story of a boy in a Welsh mining village; the 'Black River' is black with coal dust. The book abounds in vivid and dramatic incident, in humour and pathos, and holds the interest of the reader to the end. The mine explosion, the Great War which leaves the boy fatherless, the Big Strike, and the perils and hardships of his work in the mine which he entered 'while yet a child', all stand amid the normal adventures of an intelligent and daring boy. But he finds his greatest and most critical adventure in his religion. It began with the adoring admiration of a ten-year-old boy for the little Salvation Army Captain, 'the lassie from Lancashire', and it ends with his arrival at Mildmay College for training as a Salvation Army officer. This is a grand little book; if you can persuade an intelligent boy to read the first chapter he—and his sister—will read it to the end.

Ernest Denham's *Illustrated Bible Talks* form a handbook on the use of black-boards, puppetry, cutouts and Scripture word-puzzles in the religious teaching of children. Their value lies rather in the suggestion of methods than in the examples given. These, for the most part, are not distinguished by originality or imagination, and there are occasions when the elaborate means do not seem justified by the end.

G. OSBORN GREGORY

From My New Shelf

BY C. RYDER SMITH

Qumran Cave, I, by D. Barthélemy and L. T. Milik, with four collaborators (O.U.P., 63s.). In 1947 a couple of Arabs were looking for a lost goat in the Dead Sea cliffs just about where Amos did his shepherding. They noticed a cave and, when one threw in a stone, they heard something break. On entering they found a number of jars with rolls in them. Some of these they took to Bethlehem and sold them to an Arab shopkeeper. When the stinking linen covers were stripped off, they were found to contain leathern scrolls with writing on them. The shopkeeper sent some to the Archbishop of the Assyrian Monastery of St Mark's at Jerusalem. He acquired them, though he did not know what they were. He also quietly sent monks to the cave to bring away its contents. They were no experts at the business, and left many skin-fragments behind them. Meanwhile, the Archbishop sent a specimen or two to the American School of Oriental Research, and the secret was out! The Archbishop 'smuggled' many of his treasures to the United States, where most of them have been published. Meanwhile, the very site of the cave had been forgotten! But now the Department of Antiquities of the Kingdom of Jordan, who are the legal owners of all archaeological 'finds' in that kingdom, took charge. Arab Legionaries were sent to look for the cave—and found it. Then the Department, calling in the aid of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française and the Palestine Archaeological Museum, sent experts to search the cave and the dump that the monks had left, and to bring back all the remaining 'finds', however minute. Next, everything was examined—pottery, cloths and rolls—in every possible way. Specimens of the cloths, for instance, were sent to the Flax Research Establishment in Norfolk, to obtain an account of their 'make' and of certain blue patterns found on some of them. Or again, a great chemist in Chicago made 'a carbon 14 test', whatever that may be, and so helped to fix the date when the linen was made. The layers of the skin-membrane-parchment scrolls themselves were found to be stuck together with something like black glue. Other expert chemists showed that this was what was left when a skin rotted. The rotted parts of each scroll had stuck the rest of the layers together. When a roll had been exposed overnight 'at 75 per cent. R.H.' and then for six hours 'at 80 per cent. R.H.' (let him that readeth understand!), it was found possible to unroll it with a dexterous paper-knife. Then '100 per cent. R.H.' and a refrigerator dealt with each unrotted fragment, and it was laid, ready for the two writers of the main part of the volume, between blotting-paper and glass. All this, and much else, appears in Part I of the book, written by four expert collaborators. Was there ever such a story in the history of the world?

Father Barthélemy and the Abbé Milik, who are responsible for Parts II and III, have wedded erudite scholarship to an 'infinite capacity for taking pains'. With the exception of a number of small fragments that defy classification, they have assigned all those left in the cave and those purchased from the Bethlehem shopkeeper to

forty documents. These they have printed in Massoretic characters, according to the lines of the scrolls, with the *lacunae* shown in every line. To each document the two writers have prefixed a description of the state of the skin on which it is written, added an *apparatus criticus* (with references to parallels in the 'finds' in other caves), and, in the longer instances, furnished a translation. Thirteen of the texts belong to the Hebrew Canon, fourteen to commentaries and apocalyptic books, and thirteen to the rules, liturgies, and hymns of the community to which the scrolls belonged. Unfortunately, all the fragments of the Canonical books are brief. In Part III there are thirty-eight folio pages of excellent plates—of the cave, the pottery, the linen wrappings, and the fragments of skin. Some of the last include no more than a letter or two. Nothing has been lost. Apart from three of the collaborators' contributions, which are in English, the book is written in French. There is no need to praise the work of the Oxford University Press. It will be noticed that this superb volume deals only with a *part* of the original contents of *one* cave. At present there have been 'finds' in five others. Over these, of course, the Jordan Department of Antiquities, with the Arab Legion at its elbow, keeps watch and ward. During the coming years we may expect volumes on all of these, and who knows what further discoveries may be made? For biblical study there has been no archaeological 'find' to compare in importance with the Qumran Caves. There is something like agreement now that the scrolls belonged to an Essene community, and were *hidden* in the caves during the Roman troubles of A.D. 70 and after. They were *written*, of course, at earlier dates, which cannot at present be fixed.

Belief and Unbelief since 1850, by H. G. Wood (C.U.P., 12s. 6d.). In this book, printed 'with little change' from a course of lectures given at Cambridge, Dr H. G. Wood, having first traced 'three main strands in the religious thought of England in the Victorian era—Evangelical, Catholic, and Humanist', asks: 'How have they been modified? What influences have been brought to bear on them, and how have their representatives responded?' The chief subjects are 'The Impact of Natural Science', 'Literary and Historical Criticism', 'Religious Experience', 'The Question of Ethics', and 'The Quest for the Jesus of History'. Among the great names in the later chapters there come William James, Freud, Bertrand Russell, and Schweitzer, with the 'Logical Positivists' and the 'Form Critics'. Here, in particular, the lecturer unites discussion with his survey, asking a number of probing questions. Throughout he illustrates by many effective quotations from writers of the time in question. He has humorous touches too, e.g. a 'Negro ministerial candidate', being asked for his 'views on inspiration', replied: 'I think the Scriptures are sufficiently inspired for all practical purposes.' The lecturer's claim, in conclusion, is that 'Try as we may, we cannot get [Christ] out of history, and if we have any sense of reality, we cannot evade His challenge'. Dr Wood has made good this claim. (Is it justifiable to speak of 'our *frivolous* use of the atomic bomb' in the last war?)

Jabez Bunting, the Last Wesleyan, by John Kent (Epworth Press, 3s. 6d.). The subject of Mr Kent's rather curiously named Wesley Historical Society Lecture is the doctrine of the authority of the ministry held in Wesleyan Methodism in the days of Jabez Bunting, its chief expositor and practitioner. The lecturer has done us a real service by showing that our fathers' quarrels were not mere squabbles, but did involve a principle and a doctrine. He has done this, not only by expounding the Wesleyan doctrine, but by showing how far some extreme 'rebels' went in subordinating the ministers to certain lay 'elders'. Here he might have mentioned the Independent Methodists who had and have no ministers at all, and have added an account of the constitution of the Conference of the United Methodist Free Churches. I could wish that the last few pages, in which Mr Kent adds some reflexions, had been longer, for there are sentences that at least seem to have far-reaching implications.

I am not sure whether he thinks that we have now any doctrine of authority at all. For myself, I think that we have but that it is rather implicit than explicit. Ought not someone to work it out for us? It would involve the doctrine of the authority of Christ, the authority of the Church, the authority of Conference, and the authority of the ministry. In view of the approaching conversations with the Anglicans the book would be opportune. (For instance, if we are to have bishops within Methodism, what 'authority' is to select them? The Prime Minister? Why not?)

Evangelical Nonconformists and Higher Criticism in the Nineteenth Century, by Willis B. Glover (Independent Press, 17s. 6d.). In this book an American scholar fills a gap in the history of the English Free Churches. After tracing the antecedents of the story, he concentrates on the last twenty years of the century. 'There was a great storm, but the Churches weathered it. As the writer again and again points out, the chief reason for this was that the leaders in the acceptance of the results of the so-called 'higher criticism' were men who unwaveringly held and practised the evangelical faith, both in pulpit and classroom. When 'the people' saw that their faith was safe, opposition gradually sank to quite small proportions. Dr Glover quotes largely from periodicals as well as books—tracing the change, for instance, in the attitude of the *London Quarterly*. Having lived through the critical period, I can vouch for a good deal of the story. I could wish there were not quite so much repetition, and I think better of Fairbairn than Dr Glover does, but these are my only criticisms. The writer rightly gives much space to Forsyth, showing how this great theologian attacked the underlying problem of the doctrine of 'authority'—but, also rightly, adds that this problem is still with us. He himself is 'in substantial agreement with neo-evangelical theology, particularly as represented by Emil Brunner'. (On pp. 262 and 295 Dr Norman Snaith is made into a mere 'Smith'!)

The King in His Beauty, Extracts from the Letters and Sermons of Samuel Rutherford, selected by J. Cyril Downes (Epworth Press, 6s.). In a famous sonnet Milton rails at 'mere A.S. and Rutherford', but, like Paul and Augustine and Bernard and Wesley, Rutherford was a saint as well as a controversialist. He was 'far ben', as the Scotch say. The many who wrote to him for spiritual guidance treasured his replies. They did well, for 'Rutherford's Letters' are a devotional classic. I have used them myself, and I know; for one thing, there is a rare felicity with the homely but helpful symbol. Mr Downes has gathered his selections under such titles as 'The Loveliness of Christ', 'Affliction', 'the Church', and 'Heaven', and has prefixed an informative account of the life of this 'little, fair man'.

An Unfettered Faith, the Religion of a Unitarian, by A. Phillip Hewett (Lindsay Press, 7s. 6d.). No Unitarian can speak for another, but there is a certain *consensus* of opinion among Unitarians, and this book gives a clear and able account of what most of them believe today. It is so able that it would need as long a book to answer it. For Mr Hewett the great words are 'liberty', 'reason', and 'conscience'. As the list implies, a critic would more often claim to add to what he says than deny it. For the salvation of mankind he thinks that the spread of a disciplined liberty and reason and conscience will ultimately suffice—in other words, man must save himself. He claims that many share his creed who do not call themselves 'Unitarians', and this cannot be denied.

The Christian Imprint, by Fred Pierce Corson (Abingdon Press, *via* Epworth Bookshop, \$2.50). 'Without education for all, the world cannot be saved'. This seems a hard saying, but by 'education' Bishop Corson means 'Christian education' in 'home, church, school and community', and he has made it plain that when 'public education', as in U.S.A., 'presents the Church with a generation of youth whose minds have been set in the secular mold', Christian education, in the widest range of the phrase, is the indispensable duty both of the Church and of every Christian.

There is some repetition in these lectures and there are Americanisms (and why not?), but most of what the author says is pertinent in England. (But Wesley did not study at *Cambridge*, nor was Haggith Adonijah's *father*.)

Words and Wisdom, a Selection from the Writings of Henry Bett (Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.). I think I have said before that my old friend Henry Bett, while he was much more, was, like Browning's Karshish, 'a picker-up of learning's crumbs'. Sometimes he would take a handful of these crumbs, turn them marvellously into a toothsome cake, and send it to the *Methodist Recorder*. Presently readers of that journal began to ask that they might 'both eat their cake and have it', and they have gone on asking. Now, to leave the metaphor, one of Dr Bett's children has collected a number of these particular 'writings' into a book. Of course, there is abundance of 'folk-lore and word-lore'. Here are some of the subjects—'St Swithun', 'Hobson-Jobson', 'Puns', 'The Epiphany'—and the last article that Dr Bett wrote, 'If Christ is Not Risen'.

OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

Henry Carter, C.B.E., a Memoir, by E. C. Urwin (Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.). Henry Carter, leaving school at fourteen, became a salesman for margarine—and ended as one of the most famous exponents of Christian social teaching and practice in the world. When a stripling of ten years' standing in the Ministry, he was made 'Temperance Secretary', and he was Secretary, first for the Temperance Department and then for the Temperance and Social Welfare Department for thirty-one years. He came near being a perfect secretary, but he was much more. He was as loyal a Methodist as ever lived, but for him it was not enough to work within Methodism. In his own realm he 'took the world for his parish'. Long before he died, everybody knew his name—the Liquor Trade, the Government, the House of Commons, the Churches in Britain and beyond, and so on. It was characteristic of him that, when he 'retired', he gave nine years to the refugees and 'expellees' of Europe and 'died in his tracks'. In his many controversies he never 'pulled his punches', but they were all fair 'punches'. It was a brewer who said: 'Don't be rude about Henry Carter. He's an old friend of mine.' And behind his whole life there lay a burning love for those 'for whom Christ died'. His old colleague and friend, Mr Urwin, has not had an easy task, for while there is abundant evidence of the kind that comes from such things as minute-books and reports, there is comparatively little from more personal records, but, when the book ends, the real man has emerged.

Le Ministère dans l'Église Ancienne, par Dom Gregory Dix, translated by A. Jaermann et R. Paquier (Delachaux and Niestlé S.A., Neuchâtel, 6 frs. Swiss). This is a French translation of Dom Gregory Dix's contribution to the volume on *The Apostolic Ministry*, edited by the Bishop of Oxford, with an interesting preface in which Professor J.-J. von Allmen briefly discusses the attitude that French Protestants should take to Dom Dix's findings and promises us a book on the subject.

Les Réformateurs et le Fin des Temps, by T. F. Torrance, translated by Roger Brandt (Delachaux and Niestlé, Neuchâtel, 2.90 frs. Swiss). A French translation of a contribution to one of the 'Occasional Papers' of *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, entitled 'The Eschatology of the Reformation'.

The Cross in the Old Testament, by H. Wheeler Robinson (S.C.M., 10s. 6d.). A very welcome reprint of Dr Robinson's monographs on 'The Cross of Job', 'The Cross of the Servant', and 'The Cross of Jeremiah'.

An Introduction to Organic Philosophy, by Laurence Hyde (Omega Press, Reigate, 15s.). This is an essay, by a writer who has 'no academic qualifications in philosophy',

on 'the reconciliation of the masculine and feminine principles' in human nature. Through this he claims that 'the host of theories' in science, psychology, philosophy, and theology may be reduced to order under a single spiritual and creative activity.

Contributo per un superamento dei tradizionali schema sensuologici, by Giorgio Punzo (Carlo Martello, Naples, Lire 650). A study in sex and homosexuality.

BOOKLETS AND PAMPHLETS

The Reigning Christ, broadcasts by Leslie E. Cooke (Independent Press, 1s. 6d.). . . . *How does Grace come to us?*, by H. G. G. Herklots (Epworth Press, 1s. 6d.). . . . *Sunday Observance and Legislation*, the report of the British Council of Churches (10 Eaton Gate, S.W.1, 9d.). . . . *Africa—a Time for Christian Advance* (British Council of Churches, 10 Eaton Gate, S.W.1, 2d.). . . . *His Whisper Came to Me*, poems by C. Cyril Eastwood (Arthur H. Stockwell, Ilfracombe, 1s. 6d.). . . . *The Professors* (in Greece and today), an inaugural lecture by Philip Leon (University College, Leicester, 1s.). . . . *My Father's Business, Jewish Worship in the Time of Jesus*, a Fellowship Manual, by W. W. Simpson (Epworth Press, 1s. 3d.).

NOTABLE ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

- The Expository Times*, June (T. and T. Clark, 1s. 6d.).
 Some Archaeological Sites and the Old Testament: Qumrān, by J. M. Allegro.
 New Testament Theology: Where and Whither? by A. M. Hunter.
 The 1944 Education Act of England and Wales (in operation), by Geraint V. Jones.
do., July.
 The Composition of St. John's Prologue, by Humphrey C. Green.
 Meister Eckhart (and other mystics), by Charles Smith.
 The Single Mind: a Study of Charles Morgan, by T. Glyn Thomas.
 Some Archaeological Sites and the Old Testament: Nuzu, by J. N. Schofield.
do., August.
 Archaeological Sites and the old Testament: Ugarit, by John Gray.
 The Parable of the Unjust Steward, by R. G. Lunt.
 Religious Education: The work of the Army Chaplain, by D. H. Whiteford.
The International Review of Missions, July (Edinburgh House, 3s. 6d.).
 Can Islam be 'Modern'? (re Muhammad Abdul, etc.), by Alfred Nielsen.
 Christian Love and the Jews, by Frederick Neumann.
 The Christian Church and African Heritage, by E. A. Asamoa.
 Prospects for the Church in Iran, by H. B. Dehqani-Tafti.
The Harvard Theological Review, January (Harvard University Press, via O.U.P., \$1.00).
 Methodology in the Study of the Mystery Religions and Early Christianity, by Bruce M. Metzger.
 (Critical) Comments on Taylor's Commentary on Mark, by Morton Smith.
 'Mysteries of State': an Absolutist Concept and its Late Mediaeval Origins (re 'Divine Right of Kings', etc.), by Roger Pack.
do., April.
 'The Ambivalence of Aquinas' View of the Relationship of Divine and Human Law, by Jane E. Ruby.
 Style and the Man: Thomas Adams (Seventeenth-century Divine), by William Mulder.
The Congregational Quarterly, July (Independent Press, 4s. 6d.).
 Christian Dogma and Scientific Method, by B. M. G. Reardon.
 The Lord Protector: Reflections on Dr Paul's Life of Cromwell, by Geoffrey F. Nuttall.
 Early Christianity and its Environment, by E. C. Blackman.
The Hibbert Journal, July (Allen and Unwin, 3s. 6d.).
 More about Mithras, by John Ferguson.
 Divine Kings and Dying Gods, by S. G. F. Brandon.
 The Male God and the God of Males, by R. J. Zwi Werblowsky.
 The Morality of Foreign Concessions (e.g. the Anglo-Iranian), by Emile Marmorstein.
 Tobacco as a Sacred Plant, by Lewis Spence.
Theology Today, July (Princeton, N.J., via Blackwell, Oxford, 5s.).
 The Great Religions and International Affairs, by Edward J. Jurji.
 The Theology of Martin Buber, by R. Gregor Smith.
 Life Situations and (the Christian Attitude to) Non-Christian Religions, by Daniel J. Fleming.

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Printed in Great Britain by the Camelot Press Ltd., London and Southampton, and published by The Epworth Press (Frank H. Cumbers), 25-35 City Road, London, E.C.1.
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